

“THE WORKING CLASS AND THE EMPLOYING CLASS HAVE NOTHING IN
COMMON:”

THE CONSTITUTIVE RHETORIC OF THE IWW

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Chapter One:

INTRODUCTION

On July 1, 1917 Frank Little, labor agitator for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), was murdered in Butte, Montana (Carroll, 2016). He was pulled from his hotel room in the middle of the night, beaten and dragged behind a car, before finally being hung from a railroad trestle. He had arrived in Butte, an important copper mining town, to organize miners striking for increased pay and improved safety in working conditions at the Anaconda Copper Mining Company. Two months earlier a fire at a neighboring mine had killed 164 workers, prompting the strike (Gutfeld, 1969). The strike reached its peak by the end of June, with 15,000 workers at a standstill; however, the various trade unions involved in the strike began agreeing to contracts with Anaconda, and their members began returning to work (Gutfeld, 1969).

Little arrived in Butte as the strike was beginning to wane. He had hoped to re-organize the workers and re-build momentum for the strike. Little, an impassioned speaker, was short in stature with a broken leg and one working eye. He spoke openly of the need to abolish the wage system, and was critical of the burgeoning World War I, which the United States had joined in April, 1917. Little's talk of revolution, and stalled production at the mine, was labeled as seditious, and to the benefit of America's enemy, Germany. After his murder, IWW members developed a chant of "We will never forget!" to serve as a rallying cry (Botkin, 2017).

One hundred years after Little's murder, tragedy again struck the IWW. Heather Heyer was murdered on August 12, 2017, while marching with the IWW. Heyer was killed at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia while protesting white supremacy. In response to her death, the IWW released a statement acknowledging that, while she was not a member, they

would have welcomed her for standing up to the “forces of hate in one of the largest fascist gatherings in decades” (“Rest in Power”, 2017, para. 3). In closing it read, “Rest in Power, Heather. You were a comrade and a hero. We don’t forget. We won’t forgive. We will continue the fight.” (“Rest in Power”, 2017, para. 3). It is no surprise that the IWW would honor both Frank Little and Heather Heyer in the same vein: with veiled threat. Throughout its storied history, the IWW has had a mission of class warfare. Each fallen member is a martyr who will be avenged in the overthrow of an unjust capitalist system.

The Industrial Workers of the World were first formed in June, 1905 in Chicago, at a conference of socialists, anarchists, and labor organizers who had grown tired of the dominant labor strategy of organization into trade unions (Brissenden, 1957). Attendees hoped to organize “One big union,” which would unite all workers into a single organization, and then organize them by industry. This stood in contrast to the trade unionism, which organized workers by specialty, and they believed pitted members in a single workplace against one another, and promoted compliance with employers (Brissenden, 1957). The IWW was, and is, heavily influenced by Marxism (Kimmeldorf, 2005), which was immediately reflected in their drafted preamble. Echoing Marxist attention to class struggle, it opened by stating that “The working class and the employing class have nothing in common,” before calling for an end to the wage system and capitalism. Taft (1964) calls this a “class war document” (p. 291); this Marxist principle of class warfare continues to guide the IWW today.

Membership in the Industrial Workers of the World peaked in August, 1917— just before Frank Little’s murder— at 150,000 members (Lynd, 2014). By 2016, there were just 3,742 members, or Wobblies as they have come to be known. So, what happened to the IWW? Gambs (1932) argues that the IWW was deliberately targeted and persecuted for their radical beliefs. In

the early 1900s, The United States government took interest in breaking up the Industrial Workers of the World, who opposed WWI, and called for sabotage of workplaces to gain leverage from employers. While Frank Little was killed extra-judiciously, hundreds of other IWW members were imprisoned on conspiracy charges. Rank and file membership in the IWW quickly dispersed, with many members being poached into the ranks of existing unions. Government oppression continued in the coming years, as the Red Scare prompted a clause in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1946 forcing labor unions to abandon any ties to communism. By 1949, the IWW was listed on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations.

The IWW has experienced a slight resurgence in recent years, as the number of Wobblies has more than quadrupled since the year 2000. The original IWW preamble still stands, and the union continues to advocate for class warfare, while fighting for equality of all workers. Today, the IWW's legacy is not as a labor union, but primarily as a grassroots organizing force that rallied rank and file workers to the cause of anti-capitalism (Taft, 1964, p. 54) Labor activist Straughton Lynd has been a proponent of the IWW, labeling its organizing strategy as "solidarity unionism," and identifying it as a key strategy for the renewal of labor unions in the United States (Lynd & Gross, 2008).

This thesis examines the rhetoric employed by the Industrial Workers of the World. In doing so, I employ a Marxist perspective and use Charland's (1987) constitutive rhetoric to investigate the IWW's strategies to mobilize workers to organize and take action. In doing so, this thesis asks the following questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the IWW position the worker as a transhistorical subject?

RQ2: In what ways does the IWW ask its audience to complete the narrative of the worker?

I begin with a rationale for the project. Next, I review the literature surrounding the tenets of Marxism, and its implementation in the study of rhetoric. Finally, I explain the critical orientation of this project, describing constitutive rhetoric.

Chapter Two:

RATIONALE

The solidarity unionism of the IWW presents a formidable strategy for reinvigorating the power of labor unions by countering the organizational structures of the corporations they oppose and building an organized labor force that operates from the ground up as a movement. The rhetoric of the IWW is worthy of study for two reasons: (1) labor unions as a whole have experienced significant decline since the 1970s. As unions have declined, income inequality has increased, leading to an immense wealth gap between the wealthiest of Americans and the poorest, which continues to grow; (2) Declining power forced unions to re-structure, and in the process of doing so they have adopted organizing and structural tactics that have inhibited their ability to re-grow. In this section, I demonstrate the effects of declining unionization on the American public, the societal importance of labor unions, and the ways in which existing labor union structures inhibit the expansion of union strength. I argue that in the face of declining union strength and legislation which further threatens this already diminished strength, this thesis provides timely insights which will be useful for a revitalization of organized labor. By examining the IWW, I will identify rhetorical tools that may be employed to recruit workers, better structure existing labor unions, and increase the power of organized labor by inspiring workers to take direct action.

Economic and Political Factors Contributing to Union Decline

Organized labor received its first legislative blow with the passage of the Taft-Hartley act of 1946, which allowed for the creation of right-to-work laws (RTW). Such laws, enacted on a state-by-state basis, allow a state to prohibit mandatory unionization in the workplace. RTW laws allow for “free riders”— employees who collect the benefits of union collective bargaining

without paying dues— to severely inhibit the financial strength of labor unions by reducing the collection of member dues.

By 1953, seventeen states had adopted right-to-work laws (Freeman, 2008). As well as hampering unions' financial strength, RTW laws discouraged union membership. Davis and Huston (1993) found that employees in RTW states were 8.2 percent less likely to unionize compared to non-RTW states. 1953 was also the year that union density, the percentage of workers who belong a union, peaked (Flippen, 2014, para. 2). President Kennedy granted public-sector employees the right to unionize in 1962, briefly increasing union membership totals (Flippen, 2014). Though political action had influence unions' power, economic action in the current decades would prove disastrous.

The largest decrease in union membership has occurred since the 1970s and can largely be tied to economic activity. Entering the 1970s, private-sector union membership had already begun to slip, but had not reached a level to merit much worry. After a brief recession in 1974-1975, U.S. corporations began to restructure. Manufacturing jobs left the country as cheaper products began to be imported, and other strong union industries were transplanted to new factories which had no history of unionization. Indeed, since 1979, union membership has declined from 34 percent of private-sector employees to just ten percent (Semuels, 2016, para 4.).

As shifting economic structures presented new challenges to private-sector unions, political action began to reveal shifting public opinions on organized labor as a whole. After 1975, the only unions to exhibit growth in membership were public-sector unions of government employees (Nelson, 1997). The growth of public-sector unions brought about an attempt to

obtain organizing rights for these employees, the failure of which would foretell an increased decline in the strength of unions. As McCartin (2008) describes it,

The effort to enact a national collective bargaining law for government workers in the 1970s sheds light on a profound moment of political transition. But whereas the Wagner's Act passage in 1935 consummated a potent labor-Democratic party alliance that would influence U.S. politics for decades, labor's unsuccessful fight to pass such a bill for public employees in the 1970s revealed something ominous for both unions and Democrats: the extent to which the political-economic underpinnings of the New Deal order had begun to give way by the mid-1970s, deepening divisions in the labor-Democratic political coalition and handing conservatives new issues that would help propel them to national power by 1980. (p. 125)

McCartin illustrates a pivotal moment for labor, as the failure to protect public employees demonstrated the declining image that labor unions held in the public's eye. This decreased cultural value of labor unions is also apparent in recent resurgence of right-to-work laws, as since 2012 six states have passed such laws (Nagele-Piazza, 2017).

It is important to note that much of cultural and legislative assault on organized can be traced toward a Conservative movement toward privatization and deregulation. The theoretical foundations for this movement began in the 1940s but began to move towards political reality with the urban fiscal crises of the 1970s (Cohen, 2016). Viewing the government as a hindrance to economic productivity, think tanks such as Reason, Cato, and ALEC emerged which pushed for private sector control of social goods, and the removal of governmental regulation which reduced efficiency and profit. Privatization and deregulation entrenched itself into conservative political thought with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, who sold government-owned

industries to private interests, and in 1987 created the President's Commission on Privatization (Brinkley, 1987). These think tanks and philosophies today dominate conservative political thought, driving policy and discourse which demonizes any force, such as organized labor, which might halt the machine of free market capitalism.

The future of organized labor is currently in flux, with pending Supreme Court case *Janus v. AFSCME* threatening to bring right-to-work laws to all public-sector employees (Liptak, 2018). Should the court rule against AFSCME, public sector unions nationwide will be unable to collect mandatory agency fees from all employees they represent, only from those who voluntarily choose to pay. This again creates the possibility of free riders, allowing workers to benefit from union representation without paying dues to provide financial support, jeopardizing the financial security of all public-sector unions.

Organized labor's decline can be tied to both political and economic action and is only heightened by a decrease in cultural value that continues today. This decline in unionization has had a devastating effect economically on the American public.

Income Inequality

It is no coincidence that as unions began to decline in membership, a disparity between workers' productivity and wages began to grow. Mishel, Gould, and Bivens (2015) describe this gap, occurring concurrently as union membership declined,

From 1973 to 2013, hourly compensation of a typical (production/nonsupervisory) worker rose just 9 percent while productivity increased 74 percent. This breakdown of pay growth has been especially evident in the last decade, affecting both college- and non-college-educated workers as well as blue- and white-collar workers. This means that

workers have been producing far more than they receive in their paychecks and benefit packages from their employers. (para. 8)

This increasing divide between worker's wages and corporate productivity can be directly tied to the decreasing share of wealth held by average Americans. As workers are more productive, they generate more profits for the industries that employ them. All of this has occurred while unions continue to decline. In its weakened state, organized labor has not been able to secure a portion of increased profits for workers.

From 1973 to 2007, as private-sector union membership declined from 34 to 8 percent for men, and from 16 to 6 for women, private-sector wage inequality increased upwards of 40 percent (Western & Rosenfeld, 2011). This wealth inequality has reached historic levels, as Saez and Zucman (2014) write,

Wealth inequality has considerably increased at the top over the last three decades. By our estimates, almost all of this increase is due to the rise of the share of wealth owned by the 0.1% richest families, from 7% in 1978 to 22% in 2012, a level comparable to that of the early twentieth century. (p. 1)

Increasing income inequality has left Americans in a precarious position: 78% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck (CareerBuilder, 2017), and a 2016 report found that 46% of individuals, when faced with an emergency of \$400 or more, would either not be able to pay for it, or would be forced to borrow money (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, 2016).

The decline in union strength has correlated to declining wealth for Americans. This should not be surprising, for unions benefit even non-unionized workplaces by raising industry standards for pay (Brennan, 2016). If increasing economic inequality is to be resolved, unions,

like the IWW, will need to rebuild strength in order to gain leverage to demand increased wages for employees.

Importance of Unions

Organized labor's declining strength has had a devastating effect on the economic stability of the American public, but increased wages do not account for all of the social benefit that unions provide. Organized labor provides other important benefits by increasing racial and gender equality and promoting civic activity.

Though unions are likely most associated with increased pay for workers, they also provide important protections for marginalized workers more likely to suffer from inequality. For example, Rosenfeld and Kleykamp (2012) find that black women are 2.5 times more likely to join a union than their white peers, while black men are 1.5 times more likely as a result of the wage protection that unions offer. Rosenfeld and Kleykamp (2012) argued that without de-unionization the black-white weekly pay gap would have been 13-30% less in 2007 (p. 1476).

Finally, labor unions prove important by increasing civic participation. Though unions draw criticism for their political activity, union membership encourages workers to contribute politically as well. Kerrissey and Schofer (2016) describe the effects of decreased unionization on civic participation:

Fewer individuals are exposed to the mobilizing effects of union membership, which, in aggregate, implies lower levels of voting, protesting and so on. Union decline also has implications for the composition of public life, shrinking the voice of those with less education. Unions are powerful engines of political participation, and their decline betokens a less democratic future for American politics. (p. 921)

The political activity of organized labor frequently draws criticism, and has been limited through significant legislature (Underhill, 2008). However, this activity is made salient to members, and benefits democracy via increased participation.

Other Explanations for Union Decline

Though union decline may have its origins in the recession of the mid-1970s, these economic conditions do not fully account for their decline. It is necessary to explore other mitigating that have contributed to this decline and prevented a union revival. Fiorito and Maranto (1987) find six arguments for the decline of union strength: (1) structural explanations: certain demographics are less-prone to unionization, and now make up a larger percentage of the workforce; (2) union suppression, or the firing of pro-union workers; (3) union substitution by employers, where employers provide services typically provided by unions, like higher wages; (4) union substitution by the government, where increased government protection has replaced the need for union protection in the eyes of workers; (5) ideology and values, unions hold less public appeal than businesses, suggesting an overarching pro-business ideology in the American public; and (6) internal union factors, as unions too greatly reflect the same business structures they purport to resist.

Other scholars have examined this same phenomenon by seeking to understand the failure of a labor political party to develop in the United States, unlike most other developed nations. Sombart (1976) suggests that American prosperity has created a love for capitalism, prompting popular disdain for organized labor. Lipset and Marks (2000) review similar arguments made by Tocqueville and Lenin, who believed that American prosperity had been achieved by whites fighting to achieve for themselves and once a moderate level of egalitarianism, economic productivity, and social mobility had been achieved there was little

remaining room for class-based struggle that would benefit all. Eidlin (2016) draws a connection between labor's failure to organize and their long-standing connection to the Democratic Party. Following the Great Depression, organized labor attached itself to the Democratic Party, drawn to FDR's pro-labor rhetoric. This left little room to develop independently, and the Democratic politicians would go on to provide strike-breaking troops, further weakening labor's power.

Economic and political activity alone cannot account for the decline of organized labor. As the United States' economic structures have shifted, so too have the values of workers and employers, resulting in less ideological value for labor unions. Most notably, the labor movement shares some blame for its current weakened state. By failing to adapt to changing conditions, key functions of labor unions have been replaced by government and employer programs. That is, worker protections once obtainable only through the union may now be found elsewhere, hindering recruitment by reducing unions' importance in the eyes of workers. This effect is only heightened by organized labor's turn to bureaucracy, as unions may too closely resemble the corporations with which they attempt to combat.

It is clear that a revitalization of labor unions will require a turn to strategies that clearly indicate the value of an organized labor force. It must be made clear to workers that joining a labor union provides benefits that can only be obtained through joint action, not as the result of government protections or employer benevolence. Such is the strategy presented in the form of solidarity unionism by the Industrial Workers of the World.

Solidarity Unionism

The current weakened-state of labor unions is the result of economic conditions, political action, and the failure of unions to adapt to changing circumstances. In failing to adapt to changing circumstances, government and employer programs provide key worker protections

and benefits, while a turn to bureaucratic structuring has left labor unions unable to engage employers and create change (Clawson, 2003). Keenan (2015) describes this current status of organized labor, writing, “While unions regularly enter into conflict with individual employers and governments, they cannot be considered organizations committed to an ongoing antagonism with the socioeconomic system they have developed under” (p. 212). As unions have become increasingly bureaucratic, they have tended to favor employer-centered strategies to organization, which have proven less successful than more militant methods of organization (Badigannavar & Kelly, 2005). Such unions are more likely to agree to a no-strike clause, compromise with employers, or make weaker demands.

Heery and Simms (2008) find that bureaucratic unions are likely ill-suited to begin radical organization. Existing union leadership may feel jeopardized by new active members, and the existing structure lacks the skills necessary to adequately recruit members. Moody (2007) argues that union bureaucracy has forgone militancy and antagonism in a failed effort to rebuild their numbers, writing,

These days, the notion that growth and militancy have any connection, except possibly a negative one, is angrily dismissed precisely by those who lay the greatest claim to strategies for growth — namely the leaders of the Change to Win Federation and, above all, of the SEIU. (p. 101)

As Moody (2007) here demonstrates, the decrease in union strike activity is a conscious choice. The growth that unions accomplish today is largely bureaucratic, consisting not of grassroots organizing to gain new members, but strategic mergers with existing unions to maintain their remaining strength (Moody, 1988). The Bureau of Labor Statistics, which tracks union membership and activity, demonstrates how sharply union strike activity has decreased in their

2017 report. With data reporting back to 1947, the report shows a peak in 1952 with 2.7 million workers joining in 470 strikes. These numbers have decreased steadily, culminating in just 99,000 workers joining in 15 strikes in 2016.

Though the largest unions in operation have failed to radically engage employers, Lynd and Konopacki (1992) find hope in the IWW's "solidarity unionism," characterized by rank-and-file control, Direct action, and mobility of membership (Lynd & Gross, 2008). By handing control of the union over to rank-and-file workers, solidarity unionism eliminates the need for professional organizers who might turn the union into bureaucracy. Direct action, which the IWW defines as "tactics workers can undertake themselves, without the help of government agencies, union bureaucrats, or high-priced lawyers," ("Effective strikes", n.d. para. 3) provides a means for workers to gain leverage over employers when making demands. This does include the traditional strike, though the IWW notes that this may be ineffective, as employers have greater financial means than their employees, and can thus outlast striking employees. Rather, they suggest, workers might best take direct action by purposefully limiting productivity and decreasing profit. Finally, solidarity unionism has mobility in membership, where workers are free to join despite trade or industry. Such a practice eliminates the need for trade unionism which pits workers against one another, and encourages solidarity not across trade lines, but in whole as workers. These characteristics stand in contradiction to typical union practices, which remain bureaucratic and resistant to any criticism of existing union structures and practices (Lynd & Konopacki, 1992).

As solidarity unionism is largely based on the philosophy of the Industrial Workers of the World, examination of IWW literature will reveal insights into the rhetorical structure of solidarity unionism. If this model of labor organization holds the key to union revitalization,

analysis will reveal strategies for unions to implement moving forward. Moreover, this thesis will answer Cloud's (2004) call for an increased focus on organized labor in the study of rhetoric, for as Cloud (2004) argues, Communication studies has long neglected to pay labor the attention it deserves, "generally underemphasizing material conditions and the roles of economic and physical forces constraining human actors" (p. 204). Knapp and McCroskey (1968) support this as well, noting that the field has only acknowledged unions in the context of management in organizational communication. In answering this call, this thesis will examine the way in which the Industrial Workers of the World seeks to organize workers.

There is no simple explanation for the decline of organized labor. Organized labor currently finds itself weakened in terms of financial strength, membership, and public favorability. This weakness can be attributed to political action, economic activity, and organized labor's turn to ineffective bureaucratic structures. However, the solidarity unionism model of labor organizing offers a promising strategy to rebuild the power of organized labor and curtail the devastating financial effects that declining unionization has had on the American public.

The rhetoric of the Industrial Workers of the World will provide valuable insight into how organized labor might begin to rebuild. Specifically, this thesis will examine the way in which the IWW positions its audience as "workers," and the duties that they are thus expected to fulfill. Doing so will reveal rhetorical strategies that organized labor may employ to shed its bureaucratic tendencies and inspire workers to take direct action against employers.

Chapter Three:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The philosophy and rhetoric of the Industrial Workers of the World draws heavy influence from the philosophy of Karl Marx. Because of this influence, the tenets of Marxism necessitate elaboration. In this review of literature chapter, I begin with an elaboration of Marxist philosophy, so that I may use it as a tool to unpack the way in which the IWW employs Marxism to call to workers. I then examine the intersection of Marxist philosophy and the study of rhetoric, or materialist rhetoric, as it provides a useful framework for the evaluation of the IWW's rhetorical effectivity.

Historical Materialism

A comprehensive understanding of Marxism begins with Karl Marx's conception of history. Marx here provides a useful framework for understanding the way in which class shapes the unfolding of historical events. This framework, historical materialism, in turn inspires the Industrial Workers of the World, as it provides a rationale for the more equitable society class warfare will bring.

Marx's history of material conditions is commonly known as historical materialism. For Marx, the history of humans, how they live, work, and organize may be tracked in a series of class conflicts. These class conflicts, or struggles, occur when the lower class overthrows the ruling class to free themselves from oppressive working conditions. Marx's view of history is thus concerned with the moments in which material conditions changed society as a whole as a result of class struggle. As Marx and Engels (1998) describe it,

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word,

oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes. (p. 55)

As suggested, the materialist conception of history concerns itself with changing material conditions that shape society. These conditions change when a lower class overthrows its ruling class in order to gain greater agency over their working conditions. The series of class struggles have been carried out time and time again, resulting in a series of changing material conditions that have ultimately at the present-day economic system: capitalism.

Marx envisions two classes in capitalist society: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, or capitalist class. These two classes are differentiated by their ownership of capital. The proletarian must sell himself in the form of wage-labor to survive. As Marx (1964) describes it, the proletarian is “The man who, being without capital and rent, lives purely by labor, and by a one-sided abstract labor, is considered by political economy only as a worker” (pp. 71-72). In contrast is the bourgeoisie, who has access to capital: money that generates profit through the rent of owned property or invested in a business. According to Marx (1964),

Capital is thus the governing power over labor and its products. The capitalist possesses this power, not on account of his personal or human qualities, but inasmuch as he is an owner of capital. His power is the purchasing power of his capital, which nothing can withstand. (p. 78)

The proletariat and bourgeoisie classes are thus destined for conflict. The proletarian must sell their labor in order to survive, while the bourgeois generates further income simply as a result of having money to invest in property or industry.

Class struggle continues as it has throughout history, but in the era of capitalism now occurs between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Marx seems to predict an end to capitalism, writing,

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the workpeople of a factory, then by the operatives of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the middle ages. (p. 62)

Though Marx seems to predict an inevitable end to capitalism, the revolution he describes here might be better thought of as a possibility. The proletariat is capable of seizing the means of production but can only do so with mass-scale collective action.

Those who interpret Marx as describing an unescapable future, in which the lower class will inevitably overthrow the ruling class, have criticized him as being both historically and economically deterministic (Gouldner, 1980). That is to say, critics argue that historical materialism is flawed in relying on the unfolding of past events as a predictor of the future, and attributes too great a role to economics as the foundation of society. Shaw (1979) argues that this might be better conceived as “technological determinism,” in which the technological means that shape modes of production are the driving force for social relations. Though Marx is not explicit as to whether revolution is inevitable, Martin (2015) views *The Communist Manifesto* as a call to arms, meant to rally workers to conduct class warfare, suggesting that the revolution might be

best viewed as an inevitable possibility. Capitalism may be unstable but can only be overthrown if workers take action to do so.

Despite its criticisms, historical materialism remains an important lens for understanding the unfolding of past and future events. A focus on class struggle permits an understanding of the ways in which dominant economic systems come to be both put into place and replaced. This knowledge is a valuable tool in the evaluation of the Industrial Workers of the World. Historical materialism plays an important role in the philosophy of the IWW, shaping their call for class warfare that will ultimately replace capitalism as Marx predicts.

Ideology

Though historical materialism is primarily concerned with the class conflicts that arise from material conditions, Marx does theorize a role that “ideas” play in the perception of reality in the form of ideology. This section demonstrates the theoretical foundation of ideology, and the way in which it functions to alter perception of material conditions in the framework of historical materialism.

Marx re-appropriated the term *ideology* from its founder, French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy (Drucker, 1972). Destutt de Tracy envisions ideology as the “science of ideas,” a literal translation from Greek. Ideology briefly rose to prominence in post-revolutionary France, before being denounced by Napoleon Bonaparte. Though Tracy subscribes to a labor theory of value (with which Marx agree), he ultimately defended capitalist society. For this reason, Marx appropriated the term ideology. As Kennedy (1979) writes, “Ideology, thanks to Tracy, became for Marx neither simply science of ideas nor liberal political theory, but a system of thought which seeks to justify the existing mode of production and the social relationships

which spring from it” (p. 368). Thus, Marx takes ideology from the philosophical science of ideas, and into the materialist realm of class struggle, leading to its current understanding.

The ideological structure of society is most notably outlined in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1970):

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms – with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. (pp. 20-21)

Marx here reinforces that material conditions form an objective “base” to reality, as experienced through human consciousness. Dependent upon this base, however, is the superstructure of a society, institutions that form social consciousness through what he calls “ideology.”

For Marx, the means of production, or base, determine the superstructure. The superstructure is in turn made up of institutions that serve to naturalize and reinforce the current economic system. Marx (1988) describes the institutions of the superstructure, and their effect:

Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. (p. 6)

The superstructure is thus made up of institutions like religion, law, science, and politics. Through ideology, these institutions alter the way that individuals comprehend existence. It is important to highlight that Marx (1998) says these ideologies “have no history” (p. 6). They serve to naturalize existing means of production, and legitimize their existence (Eagleton, 2000). If, as Marx argues, revolution is inevitable due to objective material conditions, ideologies are useful to a ruling class as they may prevent a lower class from perceiving the need to affect change.

The Marxist conception of ideology has inaccurately been that of “false consciousness,” a term that, as Eagleton (1991, p. 89) points out, Marx never used. The sole use of this phrase is found in a letter from Engels (1934), in which he writes,

Ideology is a process which of course is carried on with the consciousness of the so-called thinker but with a false consciousness. The real driving forces which move him, he remains unaware of, otherwise it would not be an ideological process. He therefore imagines false or apparent driving forces. (p. 85)

Ideology as false consciousness would seem to suggest that ideology alters perception of reality to the benefit of the ruling class, though McCarney (1980) argues that this statement cannot be taken at face value. Rather, ideology functions to deceive the individual.

Similarly, Althusser (2001) offers an alternative conception of false consciousness: "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (p. 109). That is to say, ideology does not distort an individual's perception of reality, for reality is already unavailable to the individual as a result of humans' dependency on language. Althusser also provides further distinction as to the source of ideologies, differentiating between state apparatuses (SAs), which include institutions like police and prisons which reinforce beliefs with violence, and ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), like the church and the family, which address private life more so than public SAs.

Althusser (2001) describes ideology's effect as interpellation. Similar to responding to a simple hello, "individuals are always-already subjects" (p. 119). Simply by participating in a common cultural exchange, one is already subjected to the effects of ideology. Though Althusser's conception of ideology suggests it is limited to the realm of the ideal, he is clear that its effects are material. It informs and shapes all actions, from the common greeting to political action.

Today, ideology is well-established in the lexicon of critical scholars, there is still much debate how precisely ideology operates. Eagleton (1991) traces the difficulty of understanding exactly what ideology is and how it operates.

The term ideology has a wide range of historical meanings, all the way from the unworkably broad sense of the determination of thought to the suspiciously narrow idea of the deployment of false ideas in the direct interests of a ruling class. Very often it

refers to the ways in which signs, meanings and values help to reproduce a dominant social power; but it can also denote any significant conjuncture between discourse and political interests. (p. 221)

Marx's writings on ideology are sparse, and he failed to provide a succinct description of how it operates. In general, ideology serves to obscure the material conditions of objective reality. In doing so, the inevitable downfall of capitalism is delayed, to the benefit of the bourgeoisie. In the case of the IWW, ideology serves as something to be overcome in order to organize workers, by allowing them to understand the material conditions which oppress them, revealing the need for collective action.

Economics

Marx's conception of society is shaped to a degree by idealism in the form of ideology but is largely determined by economic material conditions. As such, it is necessary to elaborate what is possibly Marx's greatest contribution, his theory of political economy. In this section I describe the theoretical underpinnings of the economic relations in a capitalist society. That is, the economic structures that determine the relationship between proletariat and bourgeois. This relationship reveals that the worker, or proletariat, is exploited by the capitalist class, an important distinction which shapes the IWW's call to organization.

Marx's political theory is rooted in economics and begins with a theory of value. That is, theorizing what determines the value of a commodity. Each commodity, such as corn or iron, has a different purpose or use. As Marx (1906) writes, "the utility of a thing makes it a use value" (p. 27). However, each of these commodities has as exchange value as well, that is, a value in the form of money, that equates it to other commodities. For Marx, that a commodity may be

equated to another that has an entirely different use value, and mode of production, demonstrates that value lies outside the use of a commodity. Marx (1906) describes this conundrum:

Let us take two commodities, e.g., corn and iron. The proportions in which they are exchangeable, whatever those proportions may be, can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron: e.g., 1 quarter corn = x cwt. iron. What does this equation tell us? It tells us that in two different things – in 1 quarter of corn and x cwt. of iron, there exists in equal quantities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange value, must therefore be reducible to this third. (p. 28)

An amount of corn may be valued in terms of money, and there exists an amount of iron valued monetarily at that same price. These amounts of iron and corn thus have the same value, despite their different uses and processes of production. Therefore, there must be something outside of a commodity's use that determines its value. Through this process of deduction Marx determines that the value of a commodity must be determined in the process of production.

Value created in the process of production is the result of the labor embedded in the production of a commodity. As Marx (1906) writes,

A use-value, or useful article, therefore, has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied or materialized in it. How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour, contained in the article. (p. 45)

Though Marx never used the term, this theorization is known as the Labor Theory of Value and has major implications for the rest of Marxist theory.

It is important to note that when Marx refers to “value”, he does so in reference to exchange-value, not use-value, for as Marx (1906) writes, “A thing can be a use-value, without having value” (p. 47). Value, created by labor, is measured in Socially Necessary Labor Time: “The labour-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time” (Marx, 1906, p. 46). SNLT plays an important role in the production process, as it helps to establish both exchange-value and profit.

If Socially Necessary Labor Time describes the average time and conditions to create a commodity, it also describes the conditions for an average rate of profit. Under capitalism, the role of the bourgeoisie class is to invest capital which is transformed into profit and greater gains for the capitalist. Thus, if the capitalist is able to produce a commodity under the SNLT, they are able to obtain greater profit. Marx (1906) describes this process:

The directing motive, the end aim of capitalist production is to extract the greatest possible amount of surplus-value, and consequently to exploit labour-power to the greatest possible extent. (p. 363)

Value is created by labor, which in turn generates surplus-value and profit for the capitalist. Thus, the worker is exploited, as they do not receive the full fruits of their labor.

The exploitation of the worker forms the basis for Marx’s critique of capitalism: the proletariat must sell their labor to survive, which only serves to generate further profit for an already-rich capitalist. As Comninel (2013) elaborates, “a central point of Marx’s critique of political economy was that despite the political freedoms characteristic of modern capitalist society, and despite any extensions of formal equality within it, it remains a form of exploitative class society” (p. 19). Thus, capitalism is an immoral system, in which members of the lower

class are exploited by the ruling class, destined to be replaced by a more equitable economic system. This picture of the worker as exploited is a necessary development for the Industrial Workers of the World, as it frames their call for the organization of labor.

Having discussed the ideological and economic tenets of Marxism, it is now possible to theorize what the world might look like post-class struggle. Marx (1973) is vague in his description of what this world might look like, but writes:

The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them. (p. 706)

Marx here describes a world in which the productivity of capitalism is repurposed not to generate profit, but leisure time for workers. Postone (1993) describes an ideologically transformed society, writing that it “is understood essentially a matter of whether labor is recognized as that which constitutes and regulates society—and is consciously dealt with as such—or whether social regulation occurs nonconsciously” (pp. 60-61). For Postone (1993) the proletariat is successful when society reflects labor, not wealth, as central.

Both Postone (1993) and Marx (1973) offer useful descriptions of the future for the purpose of this thesis as they are absent of partisan political activity. Each describes a world in which the individual’s relationship to production has fundamentally changed. It is this absence of partisanship which informs this thesis, as the IWW operates outside the realm of electoral political activity, placing its trust not in politicians, but in workers. The IWW calls for workers

to overthrow capitalism by exerting the collective power of the working class, not electing politicians.

Materialist Rhetoric

In this section I develop the influence of Marxism on the study of rhetoric. This influence has brought about two notable developments: (1) a materialist framework for rhetoric, which focuses on the material consequences of discourse as heuristic to rhetorical theory; and (2) the analysis of ideology, or how it may be employed in a discourse, how it allows one to hold power over another, and its implications for understanding a culture. This knowledge forms an important tool for this project, allowing for an analysis that reveals the material consequences of the IWW's call to organize.

The Marxist notions of class struggle and ideology have had an impact on the field of rhetoric, namely in what Wander (1983) calls the “ideological turn in rhetorical criticism”. Edwin Black (1970), in an early writing of ideological rhetorical theory, uses the Marxist notion of ideology to classify what he terms “the second persona”, and highlights its usefulness:

Especially must we note what is important in characterizing personae. It is not age or temperament or even discrete attitude. It is ideology— ideology in the sense that Marx used the term: the network of interconnected convictions that functions in a man epistemically and that shapes his identity by determining how he views the world. (p. 112)

Black's impulse here is useful for what would later become materialist rhetoric. Traditional theorizations of rhetoric tended to focus on its persuasive elements, but as Black notes, identities, shaped by ideology, affect an audience's interaction with a speaker.

McGee (1975) further elaborates the role of ideology in rhetoric. He notes that rhetoric has been largely divorced from social theory, which is counterintuitive as social theory's formulation of social activity as "the people" is similar to rhetoric's concept of "audience." Rhetoric has traditionally resisted appeals to "the people," viewing such appeals as logical fallacies. Historically, the will of "the people" has been used to justify political philosophy. "The people" are an ideal in that they do not exist in a real sense as a collective entity, however, their collective action does have material consequences.

Calls for collective action on the part of "the people" are effective, as they rely on dormant beliefs that already unite individuals. These calls to action are rhetorical phenomena, which McGee (1975) calls "myths." McGee (1975) posits that these myths function much like Marx's formulation of ideology: they obscure a harsh reality and invite the audience to participate in a more palatable understanding of existence. Once created, myths face two struggles: they attempt to replace reality, and they seek to replace all previous myths. It is within these struggles that "the people" may be found. A society may be analyzed rhetorically, as the history of a society is the history of rhetorical myths that have spurred collective action.

McGee (1982) put forth a call for a model of rhetoric directly inspired by Marx. McGee's (1982) call is a result of asking the question "What warrants and legitimizes the theory of rhetoric?" (p. 38). Traditionally, theories of rhetoric functioned not to explain why rhetoric worked, but as prescriptive principles for the creation of effective rhetoric. Such a formulation is needlessly limiting, as it prevents knowledge of society revealed in examination of how rhetoric functions. McGee equates this to the same problem that Marx sought to address with historical materialism: idealism erases physical experience. Traditional views of rhetoric as

speaker/audience/occasion/change are idealistic as they focus on the creation of speech and ignore the material effects speech may enact.

In order to avoid idealism, McGee (1982) calls for “A material theory of rhetoric ... [which] begins with real speeches which are demonstrably useful to an end or are failures” (p. 25). A materialist conception of rhetoric must also describe what Bitzer (1968) calls “exigence,” that is, the real-world situation prompting rhetoric to affect change. McGee (1982) thus provides a model which may satisfy this, which he terms “molecular” (p. 36). Such a model does not privilege occasion, change, audience, speaker, or speech in the formation of rhetoric, but recognizes that each are intertwined. One element may appear contextually dominant, but each element depends on another and will change from speech to speech.

McKerrow (1989) seeks to divorce rhetoric from a logic of rational persuasion. Drawing from Foucault, McKerrow (1989) describes what he terms “a critical rhetoric”, which “seeks to unmask or demystify the discourse of power. The aim is to understand the integration of power/knowledge in society-what possibilities for change the integration invites or inhibits and what intervention strategies might be considered appropriate to effect social change” (p. 91). In the critical rhetoric theorization, power materializes as a “transformative activity”, “in which the social relations in which people participate are perceived as real to them, even though they exist only as fictions in a rhetorically constituted universe of discourse” (p. 103).

McKerrow provides a vital link between rhetoric and critical theory; one which employs rhetoric to explain how power is gained. However, Ono and Sloop (1992) identify a structural flaw in a critical rhetoric, writing “By separating the terms ‘freedom’ and ‘domination’ McKerrow suggests an essential difference between the two terms-that each maintains a separate space, is used at different times and for different purposes, that freedom for one person is

domination for another” (p. 49). Greene (1998) identifies this as a reliance on representational politics:

A materialist rhetoric under the sign of a critical rhetoric is left with two problems: 1) critical rhetoric begs the question as to how particular discourses become discourses of power/knowledge and 2) critical rhetoric reduces the study of power to the representational politics of practical reasoning. (p. 30)

McKerrow allows for rhetoric to make evaluative statements about how power is wielded via the critiques of power and domination. However, critical rhetoric fails to move past discourse, and ignores the multitude of ways that power is both manifested and utilized.

McGee (1990) notes that the prominence of critical rhetoric has resulted in an emphasis on “criticism” to the detriment of “rhetoric.” That is to say, critics are more concerned with the ways in which a selected text may be explained by critical theories than how it may be said to operate rhetorically. A critical rhetoric that emphasizes rhetoric, McGee (1990) argues, reveals that “the fragmentation of our American culture has resulted in a role reversal, making *interpretation* the primary task of speakers and writers and *text construction* the primary task of audiences, readers, and critics” (p. 274, emphasis in original). For McGee, the fragmentation of culture is a result of the fragments that make up all discourse. No text can be said to “stand alone,” each relies on a context outside of itself to be understood.

McGee (1990) describes three structural relationships that make up each text. First, each text bares a relationship to its sources. That is to say, an apparently finished discourse makes reference to texts outside of itself which must be condensed to their essence. For example, a reference to Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” might reduce the 272-word speech into a truncated explanation of “what it is about.” Second, apparently finished discourses have a

relationship with all of culture. This is evidenced in a speaker's reliance on common knowledge, and includes culture on a large scale, such as shared language. Finally, all apparently complete discourses have a relationship with their desired influence. No text may be understood without an acknowledgement of what it hoped to accomplish. An understanding of each of these three structural relationships are necessary to understand the rhetorical functioning of a text.

Cloud (1994) evaluates existing theories on a materiality of discourse and reaches the conclusion that "a reminder is overdue that discourse is not the only thing that 'matters'" in critique' (p. 141). Focusing on the work of McGee and McKerrow, Cloud argues that previous work has tended to be either too idealistic or relativistic, at the cost of materiality as Marx intended.

On the one hand, we find the limited claim that discourse is material because it has material effects and serves material interests in the world. This view, while tending toward idealism, does not equate reality with discourse. On the other hand, a more radical shift is evident, away from structuralist and realist ways of thinking. On this view, discourse not only influences material reality, it *is* that reality. All relations, economic, political, or ideological, are symbolic in nature. This view tends toward realism. (p.142)

Both idealism and relativism threaten materialism by losing focus on actual material conditions that exist.

Cloud's (1994) solution is to shift from idealism and relativism to a realist historical materialism "which can unmask the shared illusions of a society as ideas promulgated by and serving the interests of the ruling class, or those who control the production and distribution of material goods" (p. 145). Though Cloud is correct that "discourse is not the only thing that matters", Greene (1998) argues "Cloud limits the materiality of rhetoric to a mediating role

between a ‘ruling class’ and the ‘masses.’ Thus, we are back to the problems identified with McGee’s first attempt at constructing a materialist rhetoric: an essentialist theory of both the subject and of power” (p. 36). Cloud’s return to Marx is welcome but fails to explicate how it is that a ruling class comes to be and is guilty of defending an essentialist formulation of speaker and audience in rhetoric.

Like Cloud (1994), Greene (1998) is critical of previous materialist rhetoric scholars. For Greene (1998), “A materialist rhetoric marks how governing institutions represent, mobilize, and regulate a population in order to judge their way of life” (p. 27). Greene is critical of previous scholars’ reliance on logics of persuasion and subjectivity to explain the function of rhetoric. By doing so, these critics adopt an essentialist formation of rhetoric that takes for granted the position of audience and speaker. Such a view of rhetoric cannot be material, as it does not account for how these positions are gained. Greene solves this by proposing a logic of articulation that acknowledges that subject and speaker are in fact rhetorical creations.

For Greene, it is not enough for a materialist rhetoric to explain how ideology functions, it must also explain how material conditions are able to influence society. Greene (1998) writes,

Instead of focusing on how rhetoric represents, we should focus on how rhetoric distributes different elements on a terrain of a governing apparatus. In this way, a rhetorical materialism will be able to focus on rhetoric as a technology of deliberation that allows a series of institutions to make judgements about the welfare of a population. (p. 39)

In order to accomplish this goal for materialist rhetoric, Greene makes use of Foucault’s use of *technologies*. Foucault (1988) lists four such technologies:

(1) technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform, or manipulate things; (2) technologies of sign systems which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols or signification; (3) technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, and objectivizing of the subject; (4) technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means of the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conducts, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (p. 18)

By equating rhetoric to just one of several technologies, discourse and ideology are no longer the sole forces that explain the distribution and use of power in society. Rhetoric is free to explain the function and effect of ideology in class struggle, but material conditions may still determine the superstructure of society as Marx theorized.

As this review of literature indicates, the study of ideology has become ubiquitous in the field of rhetoric, though Aune (1990) argues that rhetorical scholars have lost sight of “Marx’s central focus of class struggle” (p. 158). Moreover, Aune (2011) adds that academics have failed to be self-reflexive when discussing ideology and hegemony and fail to see the ways in which they may perpetuate these systems. Despite this, the integration of Marxist philosophy into rhetorical theory has provided an important tool for scholars to incorporate the material consequences of discourse into analysis. One way in which materialist rhetoric may be employed to complete the goals of this thesis is via Charland’s (1987) constitutive rhetoric, which permits an understanding of the ways in which the Industrial Workers of the World calls to workers, positions them in the world, and asks them to organize.

Chapter Four:

CRITICAL ORIENTATION

In this section I elaborate the critical orientation of this project. First, I develop the theoretical framework for constitutive rhetoric. I then report the findings and procedures of authors using this same framework. Finally, I describe the texts and procedures to be used in this project. This thesis examines the literature of the Industrial Workers of the World to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the IWW position the worker as a transhistorical subject?

RQ2: In what ways does the IWW ask its audience to complete the narrative of the worker?

Constitutive Rhetoric

Though initially coined by White (1985), the most thorough development of “constitutive rhetoric” is owed to Maurice Charland’s (1987) analysis of the Quebecois movement for sovereignty. Charland (1987) argues that thinking of rhetoric as persuasion is flawed, as the “privileging of an audience’s freedom to judge is problematic, for it assumes that audiences, with their prejudices, interests, and motives are *given* and thus extra-rhetorical (p. 133, emphasis in original). That is to say, traditional conceptualizations of rhetoric fail to account for how audiences are formed, and lays claim to discursive effects not possible through persuasion alone, like identity and ideology.

Charland turns to Burke’s (1969) *A Rhetoric of Motives* to explain discursive effects for which persuasion alone cannot account. For Burke, identification is the key to the rhetorical process, as it removes the need for a transcendent audience, and allows for symbolic formulation of an audience. This is particularly useful for Charland, who links it to Althusser’s (1971)

formulation for the functioning of ideology. For Althusser, institutions reliant on ideology persist and reproduce by inscribing individuals with identity through a process he terms “interpellation” (1971). Individuals must be “hailed” or called to in interpellation in order to identify with an ideology, the same way that a rhetoric of identification calls its audience into existence. It is this process, calling an audience into being to take action, that Charland refers to as constitutive rhetoric.

In order to explicate his claims, Charland (1987) provides an analysis of the 1980 Referendum for Quebec Sovereignty. The push for Quebec’s succession from Canada began in 1967 with the *Mouvement Souveraineté-Association* (MSA), whose declaration, “Nous Sommes Québécois,” first entered the term “Québécois” into the mainstream political lexicon. The movement gathered a significant following and became the majority party in the Quebec legislative body as the *Parti Québécois* (PQ). The PQ called for a referendum on Quebec sovereignty, and released a White Paper explaining their rationale, and making their call formal. The White Paper outlined a history of the Québécois as a strong-willed people who were subjected to British rule and chose to forego their desire for independence in order to retain their French culture. The White Paper is a rhetorical document, but more specifically, it is constitutively rhetorical, as it calls the *Québécois* into existence, and asks them to seek independence.

The central argument for Québécois independence is whether the *peuple Québécois* exist, and if their identification is deserving of sovereignty. As McGee (1975) demonstrated, calls to “the people” are rhetorical, and it is only through rhetoric that they become “real”. Though not real in a physical sense, should the citizens of Quebec accept an identity of *Québécois* and act in

concert to vote for sovereignty, their collective action becomes real as it has material consequences.

The rhetorical effect of the White Paper requires audience members to identify as *Québécois*, by appealing to their essence outlined in history. I employ *essence* here in the same sense as Charland, as the simplified quality of a group. To be clear, the transhistoric subject is a rhetorical creation, called into being by a rhetor. Its existence is not natural but comprised of the qualities which a rhetor ascribes to it. The *Québécois* are presented as having a natural essence, removed from the realm of rhetoric. Charland (1987) writes of this process that, “interpellation does not occur through persuasion in the usual sense, for the very act of *addressing* is rhetorical. It is logically prior to the rhetorical *narratio*” (p. 138, emphasis in original). By tying to interpellation Charland (1987) centers identification in the rhetorical process. Moreover, Charland (1987) demonstrates that this identification, or subjectivity, can be called in to existence. To create and call to the *Québécois* is to interpellate, and to identify as *Québécois* is to become one of Black’s (1970) *personae*.

The White Paper demonstrates that *personae* exist in history and require interpretation for their essence to be made clear. This interpretation of history converts them into narratives—stories that are yet to be finished. The conclusion to this story will be logical, as it will reflect the same narrative coherence as the very essence of the narrative that the speaker forms. In the case of the *peuple Québécois*, the only logical conclusion is to vote for independence, as it is in coherence with the historical nature of the *Québécois* that the White Paper narrates.

Charland (1987) thus outlines three ideological effects of constitutive rhetoric: 1) the existence of a collective subject; 2) the positing of a transhistorical subject; and 3) the illusion of freedom. Constitutive rhetoric must assert the existence of a collective subject, as the MSA

called for the existence of the *Québécois* as a people deserving of independence. This collective subject must then be positioned as a transhistorical subject, that is, a subject that is interpreted through history, and has an opportunity to link their action today with their historical essence. Each of these three ideological effects highlight the significance of subjectivity in a constitutive rhetoric: an individual must align themselves with the identity they are presented in order to take action.

The positioning of a transhistoric subject reveals important materialist implications for a discourse, made evident by constitutive rhetoric's tie to interpellation, for as Althusser (1971) writes, "ideology is a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (p.162). Thus, the transhistorical subject reveals the way in which a discourse may employ ideology to call an individual to action by tying current conditions of existence to those of the past. In the white paper, this occurs when the *Québécois* are called to action as a result of their ancestors, those who settled Quebec. Thus, time is collapsed, and present action is logical as the result of historical activity. To those that the White Paper seeks to interpellate, they have the ability to vote for independence, and continue a legacy set forth by their ancestors who settled and maintained the land. This freedom of choice, however, is an illusion. To be clear, the transhistoric subject is a rhetorical creation, called into being by a rhetor. Constitutive rhetorics create narratives with a "logical" conclusion. The White Paper does not allow for an identification as *Québécois* that does not result in a vote for independence. There is but one conclusion to the story of the *peuple Québécois*.

Charland's formulation for constitutive rhetoric draws upon White's (1985) reconceptualization for the rhetorical functioning of the law. Seemingly traditional views of rhetoric as persuasion can be seen in the courtroom as lawyers seek to persuade jurors of an

individual's innocence or guilt. Like Charland, White (1985) sees this formulation as flawed, and instead proposes that the law is not simply a process that involves rhetoric but is a rhetorical process in its entirety. White's key contributions here to constitutive rhetoric are the formation of a collective, and the recognition that constitutive rhetorics rely on narratives.

Essential to White's argument is that the lawyer must speak the language of his audience. The lawyer must convey their technical knowledge to the audience in a way that they will understand, and that fits the given context. White (1985) describes this, writing, "There is always one speaker addressing others in a particular situation, about concerns that are real and important to somebody, and speaking a particular language. Rhetoric always takes place with given materials" (p. 695). As the speaker (lawyer) addresses the audience (jury), they address a group with "given materials" (culture). In discussing the law, the speaker might be seen not as persuading the audience of innocence or guilt, but as to how things ought to be within that culture.

As the speaker asks the audience to consider what ought to be, they are asking the audience to form a collective and decide this for their culture. White (1985) writes, "it is the true nature of law to constitute a "we" and to establish a conversation by which that "we" can determine what our "wants" are and should be" (p. 698). However, it is important to note that the law, as a constitutive rhetoric, is always formed around a narrative. The audience may be asked to decide collectively what "should be," but that decision will always provide the end to a narrative that has been presented in the form of a telling of events in a court case.

Also essential to Charland's constitutive rhetoric is Michael Calvin McGee's 1975 piece, *In Search of "The People": A Rhetorical Alternative*. McGee provides an important contribution

to constitutive rhetoric, as he recognized that calls to “the people” are rhetorical actions that seek to unify individuals into a collective via myth to enact political action.

McGee (1975) sought to wed social theory to rhetoric, as social theory’s analysis of collective action, seen as “the people,” is much like rhetoric’s focus on the audience. Traditional views of rhetoric have been critical of appeals to “the people” viewing it as a logical fallacy. However, these viewpoints are flawed, because audiences are complex, and cannot be understood simply by polling data, or reduced to simply being persuaded by rational persuasion.

McGee notes that “the people” have always been used to justify political systems. A.F. Pollard (1920) theorized “the people” are moved to political action when presented with a collective vision they wish to take part in by a political figure. When this occurs, separate individuals come together to form a collective. McGee (1975) writes of this that “contrary to the law of identity, the assertion is explicit that “the people” are both real and a fiction simultaneously” (p. 240). There is no physical existence to “the people,” yet their collective action is made real in its effects.

Though there is no “real” existence to “the people,” their calling into existence requires political myth that obscures the nature of reality. These myths are rhetorical creations, meaning that all attempts to form collective identity are rhetorical in nature. Individuals must accept the worldview presented in a myth in order to participate in the myth and be moved to collective action.

Charland’s conceptualization of constitutive rhetoric could not occur without the previous work of both White (1985) and McGee (1975). White was influential in his recognition that constitutive rhetoric is essentially the completion of a narrative that answers the question, “what ought to be?” Though McGee failed to explain why individuals come to accept the worldview

proposed in a myth, constitutive rhetoric could not be were it not for his acknowledgement that all calls to “the people” are rhetorical. Both White and McGee are essential to the formulation of a constitutive rhetoric that: 1) proposes the existence of a collective subject; 2) posits a transhistorical subject; and 3) provides the illusion of freedom.

Example of Constitutive Rhetoric

Constitutive rhetoric has provided a valuable framework to explicate the ideological underpinnings of a text, and the way they call an audience into being and to action. In this section I demonstrate the usefulness of this method by reviewing two such texts, Kumanyika’s 2015 article “‘We demand justice. We Just Getting Started’: The Constitutive Rhetoric of 1Hood Media’s Hip-hop Activism” and Goehring and Dionisopoulos’ 2013 piece “Identification by Antithesis: The Turner Diaries as Constitutive Rhetoric”

Kumanyika (2015) provides an analysis of Pittsburgh’s 1Hood Media, a grassroots media organization that organizes marches and rallies via social media in support of social justice. Specifically, Kumanyika analyzes two 1Hood music videos: “Jordan Miles” and “Occupy (We the 99).” This analysis functions by explicating the constituting world portrayed in 1Hood Media’s works, and the action for which it calls. In the case of the study’s two texts, this occurs via depictions of victimization at the hands of the state that calls for heroic action.

“Jordan Miles” is named for a Pittsburgh resident who was beaten and arrested by plainclothes officers while walking down the street (Belculfine, 2016). The officers responsible were not indicted of criminal charges, and their first civil trial resulted in a hung jury. The lyrics in the song present Miles as a law-abiding, rights-holding citizen who is the victim of a racist, ineffective legal system. As Kumanyika writes, “the incidents are presented in such a way as to disturb the identity of viewers who see themselves as part of a just, law-governed society, who

must then act to restore justice” (p. 443). In this way, the law-abiding citizen is transformed into transhistorical subject. Though rule of law is inscribed into American society, it dictates only the way in which citizens should act. If one obeying the law (Jordan Miles) may be persecuted at the hands of the police, then any individual may be subjected to such persecution. Thus, the story of Miles becomes the (potential) story of all.

Kumanyika’s (2015) second text “Occupy (We the 99)” appeals to a broader audience, by making reference to the Occupy movement and negative portrayals of Wall Street. Again present are lyrical portrayals of victimization of everyday Americans, now at the hands of a Wall Street that disproportionately profits off the labor of citizens. Visually, police officers are shown violently breaking up protests.

The depictions of victimization in 1Hood Media’s music videos are paired with depictions of three types of heroic action: “1) holding local state agencies accountable through legal action; 2) protest aimed at obtaining accountability from national government bodies and nationally influential private entities; 3) the process of assisting youth to develop critical media literacy” (Kumanyika, 2015, p. 446). As a constitutive rhetoric, 1Hood Media’s texts call their audience to identify with the rights-bearing victims portrayed in the videos. As viewers, audience members bear witness to injustice, and are constituted into a world where such action is reality, while being given a solution in the form of a heroic call to action.

Goehring and Dionisopoulos (2013) employ constitutive rhetoric to analyze William Luther Pierce’s 1978 novel “The Turner Diaries,” published under the pseudonym Andrew MacDonald. Originally published as a serial in the racist publication *National Vanguard*, the novel depicts the future overthrow of the United States government and the genocide of all non-white races. In order to understand the continued popularity of the novel, the authors employ a

constitutive rhetoric framework outlined by Stewart, Smith, and Denton (2012), which requires explaining how people feel invited to see themselves in the vision offered by the rhetoric, describing the characteristics of a shared community, explaining the organizational structure of those who accept the ideological call, and explaining how the target audience are to relate to others. Goerhing and Dionisopoulos (2013) find that “The Turner Diaries” does not function like most constitutive rhetorics, with clear calls to form an audience and what they should do, but instead by antithesis, by contrasting against enemies the audience should oppose.

Pierce’s novel offers no formal call to be constituted by its rhetoric, but instead accomplishes this via its publication in a white supremacist publication. In other words, its place of publication provides the call. Goerhing and Dionisopoulos (2013) find no overt discussion of what it means to be white “in terms of distinctive physical characteristics or ethnic lineage” (p. 374), but the characteristics of the shared community presented in “The Turner Diaries” becomes clear through portrayals of white characters’ relationships to white supremacy. The authors identify three categories of whites: 1) revolutionaries who support white supremacy; 2) apathetic whites who accept the depreciation of society brought about by the government; and 3) those who recognize the need for white supremacy but are not committed to take action.

“The Turner Diaries” offers no depiction of how its constituted audience might organize, which the authors suggest may be because elaboration of the novel’s white supremacist beliefs would alienate audiences. Finally, the novel suggests that audiences might relate to others by seeing themselves as victims and called to constant struggle and sacrifice. Pierce portrays whites as victims, inviting them to share in this identification, which might be remedied with revolution. This revolution as a whole is “reified” (Goehring & Dionisopoulos, 2013, p. 380) through the honoring of those who have sacrificed by fighting the inequality imposed on whites. As a whole,

the constitutive rhetoric present in “The Turner Diaries” functions as identification by antithesis: it offers little for the audience to identify with as a white supremacist, but instead offers a contrast against non-white characters who have caused the downfall of society.

Both Kumanyika (2015) and Goehring and Dionisopoulos (2013) demonstrate the usefulness of a constitutive rhetoric framework. Constitutive rhetoric allows for theoretical elaboration of how texts attract audiences, position them as transhistorical subjects, and provide them the illusion of freedom. The examples provided in this section have used constitutive rhetoric to analyze music videos intended to inspire activism, and a novel whose goal is to foment a race war. Charland’s conceptualization of constitutive rhetoric offers a useful critical orientation for understanding how the Industrial Workers of the World constitutes workers in order to call them to action.

Texts Used for Analysis

In order to complete this project, I examined literature written and published by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The texts present in this study included pamphlets archived online, pamphlets currently in print, and documents from the Industrial Workers of the World website. These publications largely resemble small books or take the form of folded brochures. As a historic institution, many IWW publications, particularly pamphlets, are close to 100 years old, with unreliable information as to their author or date of publication. Like most unions, the IWW is made up of smaller branches, many of which might publish their own literature. These texts have been omitted to ensure that the texts present in this thesis are representative of the IWW’s beliefs as a whole. This thesis is comprised of two analysis chapters, next I will briefly describe the 11 texts included in these chapters, and the reasons for which they were selected.

Chapter five of this thesis examines the ways in which the IWW calls to workers. As such, I have selected texts which appeal to workers in particular industries. These texts include: “A Union for all Railroad Workers,” “Coal-mine Workers and their Industry,” “Solidarity Unionism at Starbucks,” and “Contract Work.” Many other IWW texts, however, provide an overview of the union at large. These texts include: “Think it Over: An Introduction to the IWW,” “The Union on our own Terms,” “The IWW- The ABC’s of Revolutionary Unionism,” “One Big Union,” “The IWW – What it is and what it is not,” and “The Advancing Proletariat.”

In chapter six, I focus on the kinds of action to which the IWW calls workers. This chapter merited the inclusion of a smaller number of works, as the IWW’s desired action is succinct and principled, and present in many of the union’s other texts. Many of these works are also present in chapter four, as they are broad texts which detail the union’s overarching goals and philosophies. These texts include: “Think it Over: An Introduction to the IWW,” “The Union on our own Terms,” “A New Union Vision,” and “The IWW- The ABC’s of Revolutionary Unionism.” Also present are two texts which explicate direct action tactics and include: “A Worker’s Guide to Direct Action” and “Solidarity Unionism at Starbucks.”

I employ close textual analysis to examine the texts in this study. Frey, Botan, and Kreps (1999) describe close textual analysis as the careful attention to and description of “content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts” (p. 225). Additionally, Brummett (2010) writes, “close reading is the mindful, disciplined reading of an object with a view to deeper understanding of its meanings” (p. 3). More specifically, Leff (1992) argues “Textual criticism (or “close reading”) centers on the effort to interpret the intentional dynamics of a text” (p. 223). Finally, when conducting a close textual analysis, it is important to incorporate relevant contextual information. Hart (1976) illustrates this importance, drawing a distinction between

“those critics who would conduct their analyses in a theoretical vacuum and those who view their critical objects as satellites orbiting within a complex universe of discourse” (p. 71). Thus, the goal of close textual analysis is to understand and describe how a text functions rhetorically, or to interpret its meaning, while incorporating relevant contextual information which may shape its understanding. Close textual analysis is a fitting method for this analysis, as it allows texts to speak for themselves, while incorporating relevant contextual information which may shape them. This method is particularly fitting, as it allows me to fold in political events which have informed the texts present in this thesis.

In order to understand the transhistoric subject presented in this literature, I call up on the Marxist interplay of capital and the worker, which shapes the IWW’s call to the worker. In accordance with historical materialism, this call positions the worker as exploited by the capitalist class, which can only be overcome with collective direct action to overthrow capitalism. Specifically, this analysis is organized as follows: in chapter five I utilize the Marxist conception of class struggle to demonstrate the ways in which the IWW seeks to position workers as proletarian and as transhistorical subjects; and in chapter six I draw upon IWW literature to establish how the union uses constitutive rhetoric to incite action from proletarian identity. Thus, this thesis answers the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the IWW position the worker as a transhistorical subject?

RQ2: In what ways does the IWW ask its audience to complete the narrative of the worker?

Chapter Five:

BUILDING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

As a labor union rooted in Marxist principles, the IWW's call to workers seeks to position them in the class system, and within a larger narrative of class struggle. This strategy serves to create an organization of informed, knowledgeable workers. As they describe it:

The power of the capitalist class is a delegated power, which labor ignorance has invested in it. It has no power in itself. Labor is power, and, when conscious of its own interest and its social responsibility, it is the only power. Therefore, the I. W. W. depends upon education, not upon terror. Facts are its weapons, not bombs. It is busy teaching instead of intimidating. Its arsenal is lined with bookshelves, and not with gunracks.

Truth is its artillery, and justice its objective. (The I.W.W.: What It Is and What It Is not)

The call to workers is one of consciousness raising, specifically class consciousness. Workers are unable to organize without awareness of their own self-interests, and the ways in which the capitalist class opposes this interest.

Cloud (2018) writes of the call to raise class consciousness that "communicative action must mediate between class position and consciousness of the system and one's place in it, of its mechanisms and weaknesses, and of actions one could take against it." (p. 3) This analysis reveals two rhetorical strategies which the IWW employs to instill class consciousness and subsequently inspire action by workers. I begin by discussing the link between theory in praxis, in which overarching Marxist theories of class and economics are related to everyday experiences of workers so as to demonstrate their root in the inequalities and class structure capitalism. Second, I discuss the pairing of collective memory and material reality, in which past events shape the everyday inequalities facing workers in the present.

Bifurcated Purpose

To begin instilling workers with class consciousness, they must first understand their role in society's class structure. To accomplish this, the IWW adopts a bifurcated approach to raising consciousness: this strategy shifts between the theoretical abstractions of proletariat and bourgeoisie, and the ways in which workers and their employers embody these positions in material reality. Further, it requires alternating from Marxism's macro-level focus on class and economics, to the micro-level focus on the conditions found in an individual workplace. In making a connection between Marxism and everyday working conditions, the IWW seeks to organize workers by providing a praxis, or logical application of the now understood Marxist theory.

At the heart of Marxist political economy is the exploitive relationship between proletariat and bourgeoisie. This relationship also centers the theoretical language of the IWW: the call to organize workers begins with an understanding of class, and their fundamental opposition. In this section, I demonstrate the IWW's bifurcated approach beginning with an analysis of the relationship between theory and praxis, before discussing the merging of public and private spheres.

Theory/Praxis

Before identifying as proletarian, workers must first understand that there is indeed a class structure, whose clashes Marxist theory dictates have shaped society. That is, the institutions and ideological structures present in the world are shaped and influenced by capitalism's relation between proletariat and bourgeoisie. This historical materialism, also known as economic determinism, drives the IWW's call, as it provides the basis for the proletarian class with which it asks workers to identify, and inspires hope for a more equitable post-capitalist

world. The IWW's goal to abolish the wage system is obtainable, for if workers change and control the means of production, then societal change will ensue, supporting this new system.

The IWW describes this theory in their own words, writing,

We hold that the manner in which people make their living determines the form of their society. The changes in social institutions which mark the history of the human race have always been due to previously occurring changes in the mode of production. (The I.W.W.: What It Is and What It Is not)

In this passage, the IWW makes clear their adherence to the historical materialism which drives Marxism, cementing it as a central tenant of the union's beliefs.

A 1919 IWW publication, *One Big Union*, mirrors Marx's own description of the capitalism's conception as historical materialism:

The feudal lords had to surrender their sceptre to the ascending bourgeoisie, better known today as the capitalist class. The latter, at the outset, had in view only the free development of all forces of production, in an era of unrestricted competition between individuals. When, over a century ago, the change was consummated by revolutions, the instruments of production were more equally distributed. (Trauttmann, 1919)

By echoing the theoretical language of Marx himself, the IWW is able to demonstrate society's current configuration is the result of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, driven by changes in class and economics. Feudal lords, who ruled with a "sceptre," were replaced when the bourgeoisie gained power, or "ascended," via the ownership of capital, not land.

Historical materialism plays an important role in the organizing strategy of the IWW, as it forms the basis for the more equitable world that a worker's revolution might bring. *The I.W.W.: What it is and What it is Not* describes the dire need for this revolution:

The old social order and the new economic system are at odds and threaten the existence of the race. For now as in all previous times, organized human society is dependent upon the wealth-producing element within it. As this element is made to suffer, society tends to decay. The magnificent social structure of our modern day cannot rest securely upon a proletarian foundation which misery and degradation are tormenting into restlessness. And, unless constructive progress is made, catastrophe must inevitably ensure. (The I.W.W.: What It Is and What It Is Not)

Noteworthy here is the pivot from theoretical Marxism, to the living world of the worker. Society's structure and its economic system are in opposition, as are the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. As this passage makes clear, this opposition might prove disastrous. No longer is historical materialism just a useful tool for explaining the past, it illuminates injustice the worker may feel in the world today. Moreover, this provides a sense of urgency to the IWW's call; the need for revolution is not just to secure better economic standing for workers, but to save a decaying society.

Though historical materialism illuminates the class struggles that ultimately shape society, it provides no particular identity with which workers might identify. To call workers to organization and action, the IWW relies heavily upon relaying the relationship between proletariat and bourgeoisie, worker and employer, in order to demonstrate the fundamental inequalities of capitalism. Marxist theory predicts the possibility for societal change, or revolution, should the proletariat realize the collective power they hold, and operate in unison to seize the means of production. The IWW shares this goal, which shapes the way in which they address workers and describe the reality of the proletariat class. As told by the IWW, this reality is one in which workers serve as wage slaves to the capitalist class, though hold immense

potential through sheer numbers and operation of the means of production which permit society to function. IWW publication, *The Advancing Proletariat*, provides a technical description of the working class:

Unskilled laborers and non-specialized machine operatives are now usually denominated 'Proletarians,' and by 'the proletariat' we mean a class of laborers, possessing neither property nor specialized skill, who sell their labor-power in the open market to the highest bidder, and are able to sell that power only so long as it will produce a profit for the purchaser. (Woodruff, 1919)

Again mirroring the language of Marxist political economy, the IWW begins to distinguish workers from those that might employ them. Inaccessible to those who have not studied Marx, workers are positioned as unskilled workers, without ownership of means to generate profit.

In a transcription of a Eugene Debs speech, distributed in pamphlet form by the IWW, Debs describes the relationship between proletariat and bourgeoisie:

You get a wage, and that wage suffices to keep you working for the capitalist. The tool you work with has got to be oiled, and you have got to be fed. The wage is simply your lubricant. The wage oils you and keeps you in working order. The capitalist doesn't intend that you shall ever be anything but his wage-slave. You, as a workingman, belong to the lower class. (Debs, 1909, pp. 19-20)

Under the conditions of capitalism, workers are relegated to be members of the lower class. This relationship between worker and employer is only tenable as long as the proletarian is reliant upon the wages of the capitalist in order to survive. This reliance upon the wages of the capitalist is so severe, that the relationship is related to that of slavery.

Debs (1909) also acknowledges the potential of the proletariat to change their social standing, arguing, “you will be the lower class as long as you are content to be that class” (p. 20). Realizing this potential requires that workers understand the value of their contribution to society in the form of their labor. Another IWW pamphlet describes this contribution:

The clothes we wear, the food we eat, the houses that afford shelter, the means of transportation on land, sea and air would all be out of reach, were not the hands of the wage laboring class busy in productive social service. Society does not depend upon the capitalist or the politician. It depends upon the workers. (The I.W.W.: What It Is and What It Is not)

Though the capitalist class owns the means of production, they themselves do not operate the machinery that permit these means to function. In transmitting this information to workers, the IWW seeks to demonstrate the inherent exploitation of capitalism, and the necessity of societal change.

Capitalism denies workers the ability to realize their potential through their reliance on the wages of the bourgeoisie, but existing labor unions that ought to help workers exert power fail by mimicking the power structures of the workplace. The IWW describes these unions, writing,

On the job, doing the work, and giving the employers whatever real opposition they get, are the union members, the rank and file. Whatever life the unions have, is the life the rank and file gives to them. Here on the job is the muscle and backbone that has to carry the heavy load of two sets of bosses — the bosses who issue pay checks, and job orders, and the bosses who issue the union orders. (Attention Trade Union Workers, para. 2)

In describing leader unions as bosses, these managers are equated to the same individuals who control the workplace. Though they are few in number, they control the rank and file, the majority of workers who hold no power over others, no position of management. They negotiate with employers on the behalf of workers but can issue orders and dictate working conditions without the approval of the majority of workers.

The word “boss” carries a negative connotation, particularly when employed by the IWW. In employing this term, the IWW is able to relate the theoretical underpinnings of Marxism to the conditions facing workers. This negative association is further elaborated in the following:

To the wage workers The Job is a monstrous thing with a long, tiresome work schedule and unmerciful demands. And associated with this force of Job pressure is that unsavory word, Boss—that which controls the do’s and the don’ts and the blowing of a whistle.

[sic] (Attention Trade Union Workers)

The “boss” is relatable to workers, as each has at least one manager, who is responsible for enforcing company policy, and disciplining those who do not comply.

As the IWW discusses the realities of class to workers, it portrays them as members of a lower class that are reliant upon the upper class for wages and means of subsistence. Though the proletariat are in a lesser position, they have the potential to induce societal change as a result of their larger population. Workers deserve to control the means of production, and the means of their subsistence, because they perform the meaningful labor which the capitalist class cannot. The bourgeoisie may own the factories, but they are unable to operate their machinery, and perform the labor upon which society depends.

In linking Marxist theory with the realities workers face every day on the job, the IWW establishes a theoretical foundation upon which they can call workers to organize. This strategy relies on relating formulations of class and historical materialism to workers to demonstrate the necessity, and potential success, of a worker's revolution. Rank and file workers hold untapped potential due to their majority in the workplace, and their ability to operate the means of production upon which society depends. This power remains as potential, as workers are dependent upon the capitalist class for subsistence in the form of wages. However, workers have the means to abolish the wage system that drives capitalism. Historical materialism dictates that as economic systems change, so does society.

Public/Private

Having imbued workers with an understanding of the class struggle within which they are situated, the IWW pivots to demonstrate how this struggle has shaped their working lives. By adopting such a strategy, the IWW is able to further appeal to workers by demonstrating the ways in which the class struggle and inequalities of the public manifest themselves in the private sphere of the individual workplace. In this section, I discuss this second bifurcated strategy of the IWW's organizing call: the linking of public and public spheres to demonstrate that inequalities in individual industries and workplaces are the result of capitalism's inherent inequality.

Habermas (1974) describes the public sphere as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" (p. 49). That is to say, the public sphere might be conceived of as discourse, or an abstraction as it applies to society as a whole. In the case of the IWW, division into proletarian and bourgeoisie identities is a description of the public sphere: it demonstrates the relationships and interactions that make up a capitalist society in total. The public stands in contrast to the private. It is segmented into smaller interests. Hanisch

(2006) demonstrates the relationship between the public and the private, writing, "personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions...there is only collective action for a collective solution" (p. 4). By linking the problems that workers face in their industries to larger systemic issues, the IWW can call for collective action that might build more equitable public and private spheres.

The Industrial Workers of the World publish literature that describes the relationship between proletariat and bourgeoisie, worker and employer, but also pamphlets targeted to specific industries, which highlight the particular struggles that those workers face. One such publication, *The Lumber Industry and its Workers*, echoes the importance of the working class, by demonstrating the necessity of lumber workers: "Even today, without wood and the products of wood, civilization in its present form could not exist." Another, *Coal Mine Workers and their Industry*, includes several charts detailing the world's known coal reserves in order to demonstrate the "great inheritance which will soon fall to us when 'old man' Capitalism turns up his toes." The proletarian class plays an important role in operating the means of production, but the IWW elaborates the worker's importance with demonstration of an industry's particular importance.

Though each industry plays an important role in the collective whole, privately the workers in these industries face unique problems. By addressing these problems, and tying them to capitalism's history of class struggle, the IWW is able to strengthen the constitutive effect of their call. West (2007) demonstrates a similar effect in his analysis of La WISP's cookbook, which he argues tied the maternal notion of cooking and providing for the family, to the wider maternal-value of pacifism. This tie, West (2007) argues, is the "rejection of the mutual exclusivity of the public and private spheres" (p. 370). As La WISP demonstrates the problems

of the private household reflect the public totality of all households, so too does the IWW demonstrate that the problems of a particular workplace are endemic of all workplaces.

A Union for all Railroad Workers relates the history of inequality that railroad industry workers have faced: “railroad men have long suffered low wages and deplorable conditions in the vain hope that the Brotherhoods, through legislation, demands or pleadings, would alleviate them.” Another, *Contract Work*, discusses the exploitation employers levy on workers via contract work, regardless of industry:

When a clothing worker takes out a contract, they call it sweat shop work, and a construction worker knows that "station" work is the same sort of thing. Contract labor, now called "leasing", in the mining industry is the normal way of operating now.

By addressing the particular concerns of workers in mining, lumber, clothing, and construction industries, the IWW begins to blur the line between public and private by demonstrating that these problems are not limited to a singular industry but are actually the result of the capitalist system which by definition must exploit workers. Individuals can see that fellow workers face similar problems in their respective industries. Exploitation and poor working conditions in the private sphere are shared by all in the public.

Many IWW publications feature political cartoons and illustrations which further relate workers’ struggles. A 2011 publication aimed toward workers in the service industry, *Solidarity Unionism at Starbucks*, features a number of these illustrations, depicting the complaints of baristas’ working conditions. One such picture articulates Starbucks workers’ demands for more consistent scheduling. In it, the Starbucks logo, the Siren, stands surrounded by baristas with their arms crossed angrily. The Siren holds above her head a pair of dice, as she prepares to roll

them on a craps table which equates potential dice roll outcomes with scheduling possibilities, highlighting the perceived randomness of the schedules.

The IWW's call to workers adopts a bifurcated approach, simultaneously linking theory and praxis, and private and public spheres of life. In linking theory and praxis, the union is able to provide a theoretical rationale for capitalism's inequality while demonstrating the veracity of these claims by illustrating the manifestation of these inequalities in the everyday reality of workers. Moreover, this bifurcated approach merges public and private spheres of life, in which the class struggle and exploitation that drive capitalism are related to the inequalities of individual industries and workplaces. Having demonstrated this bifurcated approach which attunes workers to the injustices they face, I now turn to the IWW's second rhetorical strategy, which positions workers current material reality as the result of a narrative of class struggle.

Collective Memory and Material Reality

The IWW relies on Marxism to illuminate the economic foundations of society which drive class struggle and shape its institutions. However, it further supports these theoretical underpinnings by demonstrating their role in the unfolding of the events of labor history. These events are the logical conclusion of class struggle, and of an economic system which is designed to exploit workers to provide profit to the capitalist class. As a longstanding labor union, the IWW is able to present a collective memory, in the form of a narrative of American labor history, made up of labor battles and political events which have shaped material reality and portrays workers as victims. This strategy demonstrates that workers and employers have been in opposition since the beginning of capitalism; a battle that the working class has consistently lost. This struggle shaped early labor battles, the formation of labor law, and the current economic conditions which plague the working class. In this section, I demonstrate this collective memory

of victimhood, tracing the IWW's outline of American labor history. In doing so, I argue that the IWW positions workers as what Charland (1987) terms "transhistorical subjects," collapsing time to use past events as justification for present action.

It is important to make a distinction about the IWW's narrative timeline, in that it is a subjective production. Hasian and Frank (1999) elaborate the difference between history and collective memory, writing,

histories are those punctuations of time that have been accepted by the majority of intellectual communities as an authentic record of past events... collective memories, on the other hand, are the public acceptances or ratifications of these histories on the part of broader audiences. (p. 98)

The difference between histories and collective memories lies in the size of their desired audience. Histories seek to appeal to all, providing an objective record of events that ought to incorporate both sides of a story. Collective memories record a subjective tale, which reinforces the beliefs of an interested group. For the IWW, this is a tale of victimhood. Capitalism stacks the deck against workers as employers exploit them, labor law disfavors them, and labor unions mirror corporations.

McGeough, Palczewski, and Lake (2015) provide a relevant case study illustrating this difference, discussing two competing monuments memorializing the Haymarket Riot of 1886. During a labor demonstration seeking an 8-hour workday, a bomb was thrown, and a riot erupted, killing eight police officers and an unknown number of civilians. Afterward, two statues were erected, one in Haymarket Square memorializing the fallen officers, and another in Waldheim Cemetery in honor of fallen civilians and executed agitators who may have been unfairly convicted. McGeough, Palczewski, and Lake (2015) argue that each monument serves

as collective memory, for neither offers “objective recordings of a fixed historical past” (p. 250). The police officers’ memorial ignores civilian deaths, and the fact that police may have acted in an aggressive manner, prompting the riot. The Waldheim Cemetery monument valorizes labor agitators who may have been unfairly convicted, but overlooks that bombs were thrown, and police officers were killed.

The IWW are a storied organization, and proud of their role in early labor battles when the union was greater in numbers and strength. The IWW justifies this focus on the past, writing,

What can we gain by this long memory, this unfashionable occupation with the past?

These stories contain abiding truths, examples of how the working class coped with the higher level of struggle, a hotter brand of trouble, a more naked fist of attack, in times gone by. We can’t copy these old actions or treat them as blueprints to be followed with exacting accuracy. That would be foolish. But the core information, about how the wobblies of yesteryear looked at the problems they faced, and how they applied the principles and knowledge of their many struggles and many battles, that’s the gold we must mine and refine. (Acott, p. 28)

The IWW, which memorializes its slain heroes as martyrs, continues to tell their stories to demonstrate the resolve of early labor organizers. They serve as a guide for the way in which workers should organize themselves and conduct class warfare.

Early labor battles were hard fought and bloody, but as the IWW argues, organized labor’s association with violence and organized crime was initiated by the ruling class (The I.W.W.: What It Is and What It Is Not). These early labor battles led to political reform in order to reduce violence in the form of the National Labor Relations Act, or Wagner Act, of 1935 As the IWW describes it,

Recognizing that there was no way to crush unions altogether, and tired of continual strife, the bosses offered a deal: If unions would agree to give up their industrial power and instead work through proper channels – the National Labor Relations Board in the United States, various provincial boards in Canada – the government would act as “impartial” arbiter to determine whether or not the union was the bona fide representative of the workers. (Buss, p. 6)

As a result of labor struggle that secured essential rights for workers, the capitalist class sought to shift the focal point of future struggles from picket lines to meeting rooms by calling for regulation of organized labor.

As the IWW argues, the NLRA was the beginning of the downfall of organized labor.

Buss (2006) elaborates:

The Wagner Act – while it allows for protections for workers engaged in minority unionism through its provisions protecting concerted activity – was welcomed by officers of business unions because, among other things, the law guaranteed exclusive bargaining rights to unions that won representation and facilitated maintenance of membership provisions like dues check-off. (Buss, p. 8)

By providing exclusive bargaining rights to majority unions, bureaucratic business unions were able to become lazy as a result of their guaranteed ability to gather dues and maintain existence without having to prove effective. Acott describes the unions as “the most undemocratic organizations on earth” (p. 11). They operate from the top down, with union leaders issuing orders and negotiating on the behalf of workers without majority consent. These union, which ought to be one of the few institutions advocating for workers, were incentivized to abandon workers by labor law.

Bureaucratic labor unions are the result of a history of class struggles that have seen the bourgeoisie continue to prevail. As Buss (2006) argues, “Because most unions accept that workers are on earth to be managed, and bosses should run the world as they see fit, it isn’t a surprise that most union contracts allow management to have total control over a workplace” (p. 8). Though organized labor gained legitimacy through the Wagner Act, it resulted in labor unions which serve to reinforce differences in class, not disrupt them. Union leaders serve as bosses, exploiting the labor of workers just as employers. They “hoard up big strike funds,” (A Worker’s Guide to Direct Action) collecting dues from members without returning benefits.

As labor unions have become bureaucratic and ineffective, economic conditions for rank and file workers have worsened. IWW literature describes the upward movement of wealth:

Since 1970 there has been a great change come over the world. A shift in “wealth” unknown previously has impoverished millions and made a handful rich beyond all previous dreams (The IWW – The ABC’s of Revolutionary Unionism)

Occurring in the last 50 years, the upward shift of wealth has occurred under the watch of bureaucratic unions. Although supposedly benefiting from the protection of labor law, large unions have proved unable to earn concessions for workers in the form of income.

Organized labor’s failure to benefit the working class has created an unprecedented change in the relationship between profit and wages, which Acott describes, writing, “For the first time in modern history profits are going up while wages and benefits are going down. In the past the two have always been tied, however unequally” (p. 3). These changing economic conditions have created a vastly unequal reality which illustrates the opposition of class. IWW literature describes this reality:

Today, the world's 340 Billionaires control more wealth than the 2 BILLION poorest people do. Everyday we witness starvation, environmental degradation and the destruction of human culture for what? To make a couple of thousand people rich and powerful. [sic] (The IWW – The ABC's of Revolutionary Unionism)

Rampant wealth inequality provides a logical conclusion to the IWW's call to action. The inequalities of capitalism and class struggle have transcended demands workers might make in a single industry, or singular workplace, and stained the worldwide economy. This inequality is clearly not trivial, as it starves workers and kills the planet. So central is this inequality to the union's purpose, that *Think It Over* describes the "blood and suffering" necessary to fight against it. Uniting theory and praxis, and public and private spheres, the IWW is able to hail workers with a call of worldwide inequality, which workers collectively hold the power to overcome.

The IWW's strategy of connecting collective memory to material reality provides an important counterpart to its bifurcated approach. This strategy utilizes collective memory in the form of a narrative of labor history, to illustrate a subjective telling of class struggle culminating in extreme wealth inequality. This collective memory is one of victimhood. As the IWW makes clear, capitalism is a system set against workers. Employers exploit them, labor law favors employers, and labor unions have become undemocratic organizations which do not represent workers' interests. With this collective memory the IWW positions workers as transhistorical subjects, collapsing time to link the actions of previous labor struggles and their exigencies to the wealth inequality and unfair working conditions facing the proletariat today.

Conclusion

The organizing call of the IWW demonstrates two rhetorical strategies. First, its bifurcated approach links theory and praxis, and public and private spheres, to educate workers

on the Marxist principles that guide the union and position them as proletarian in the class structure that drives historical materialism and capitalism. Finally, the IWW positions workers as transhistorical subjects by tying material reality to a narrative collective memory of victimhood. With these strategies, the IWW begins to meet Cloud's (2018) standards for instilling class consciousness which "must mediate between class position and consciousness of the system and one's place in it, of its mechanisms and weaknesses, and of actions one could take against it" (p. 3). Having firmly rooted workers in their class position, the IWW is able to organize workers to coordinated action.

Chapter Six:

SOLIDARITY FOREVER

Class consciousness informs workers of their position in a capitalist society and awakens them to the harsh reality of exploitation. This knowledge alone is not sufficient to turn the tide of workers' fortunes, as collective action is required to harness their collective power. The call to action, however, must encourage class consciousness. As Cloud (2018) argues, "communicative action must mediate between class position and consciousness of the system and one's place in it, of its mechanisms and weaknesses, and of actions one could take against it" (p. 3). Having instilled workers with a sense of class consciousness, the IWW directs workers toward specific action. Because this action is reliant upon the worker's understanding of class struggle, it is interrelated with the consciousness-instilling strategies of the previous chapter. The IWW paints a picture of history in which workers are perpetual victims of the capitalist class. Bleak as this reality may be, the IWW provides a counter to this reality in which workers rely on one another to take control over their working conditions and lives. This action relies on solidarity, which is made up two components: self-reliance and direct action. In this chapter I analyze the IWW's call to action. In doing so I argue that the IWW enacts two strategies to achieve this action: asking workers to complete the narrative of victimhood with collective action, and a comparison of the IWW with other larger unions. I begin here with a description of solidarity, as it is the philosophy guides the actions which the IWW asks workers to take.

Solidarity

To harness the untapped potential of the working class, the IWW asks workers to join together and act in unison. Though workers greatly outnumber their employers, they exist in an economic system which is against them. As such, they must take principled, unified action to

avoid being divided by employers. In this section I outline the philosophical underpinning for this action, solidarity. I argue that solidarity is made up of two components: self-reliance and direct action. Additionally, I argue that solidarity functions as both a verb and a noun; it is an action that workers undertake, and a way of being for the working class. I begin here with solidarity before moving on to the union's rhetorical strategies, for it serves as the guiding philosophy to workers' actions.

Self-Reliance

As the IWW makes clear, workers are by nature set in conflict with their employers, who thus cannot be expected to take action that might benefit workers and hinder the ability to generate profit. Furthermore, the large labor unions which ought to represent workers interests have become bloated undemocratic institutions which mirror the corporate structures they purport to oppose. Given this, the union calls workers to band together in solidarity, and to rely on the only group that shares their interests and needs: fellow workers. Miller (1970) is explicit in this belief, stating "The needs and best interests of the working class are in opposition to the needs and best interests of the employing class... We, the workers, have the power to gain the things we need by working together toward our common goal. This is solidarity". Acott (2006) describes the extent to which workers must rely on one another:

We have only one hope of fending off this tidal wave of misery. That hope, that tool, is solidarity. Every working stiff must stand up for every other working stiff, no matter where you live or where you come from, no matter if you are male or female, young or old, we must stand together. Every loss to any worker is a loss to us all, and every gain by any part of the working class is a victory for us all. (p. 3)

Solidarity requires that workers stand with one another in opposition to their employers. It asks that workers harness the collective power of the proletarian class in self-reliance as the only counter to hegemonic bourgeoisie forces.

Solidarity might seem abstract, but *You are the Union* provides a detailed code of ethics for how workers ought to conduct themselves:

- Always remember that power is in unity;
- Never “rat” to the boss on another co-worker for any reason;
- Never degrade other workers because of their race, sex, sexual preference, or religion, even if those workers are not in the union;
- Make the job easier by working together, so that the job is more efficient and less stressful;
- Never discuss internal union business in front of a boss;
- Always defend a fellow worker in front of the employer, and deal with differences later;
- Never badmouth a fellow worker to the boss

Solidarity requires absolute cooperation between workers, regardless if they are in the union or not. This tactic also reinforces the absolute distinction the IWW sees between workers and employers. Workers are to provide little as little cooperation as possible with management, and never at the expense of their colleagues. Any weakness shown might be used to divide workers, hindering the union’s cause. Moreover, as suggested by the rigidity of this code, solidarity is not something which one just performs, it is a way of being. In this sense, strict adherence to IWW’s standard of solidarity functions as a sort of ideology for the class-conscious worker. They are

expected to display absolute unity with their fellow workers not just to improve conditions on the job, but because solidarity is the code of the proletarian.

Direct Action

Solidarity provides a strict code for how workers should organize to protect one another but it cannot alone harness the collective power of workers in order to improve their material conditions. It provides important cohesion between workers, which serves as the philosophical basis for any collective action they might undertake. The relationship between workers and employers dictates that the former be exploited of their labor to generate profit. If workers are to begin to harness the collective power that solidarity provides, and have their demands of employers met, they must threaten the profit-making mechanism. This tactic, direct action, relies on solidarity and occurs in the workplace with workers using the tools and regulations of the job in order to hamper productivity and compromise an employer's profit. Acott (2006) provides a useful definition of the term:

Direct action can be defined as the use of any tool, tactic or strategy that you can control yourself. It means using tactics which directly address your problem. It's straight-forward and simple and you can trust it. It succeeds or fails according to how good your idea is, how forcefully it is applied, how appropriate it is to your situation. (p. 5)

Though vague, this definition emphasizes how direct action relies on the self-reliance that solidarity affords in order to be effective. Workers must control the means which they use to gain leverage over employers. They cannot rely on anyone but themselves to see to their needs are met. It must be applied forcefully, for any division among the rank of workers might be exploited by employers to create division and halter progress.

What kind of tactics might workers employ in direct action? *A Worker's Guide to Direct Action* describes some previously used union tactics, as well as the historical context that dictated their use. It includes such tactics as: *the slowdown*, where workers provide as little productivity as possible; *work to rule*, where workers follow cumbersome regulations to the letter of the law, highlighting the inefficiency of these rules by demonstrating how they affect productivity; *the good work strike*, where workers remain on the job, yet do not adequately bill customers for goods and services in order to maintain the running of vital industries like hospitals, while cutting into profit margins of employers; *sitdowns*, or impromptu strikes which allow workers to halt production at vital moments or to show solidarity with fellow workers over grievances that occur throughout the day; *the open mouth*, in which workers share compromising information with the public, such as unsanitary food preparation conditions, in order to force employers to meet demands and improve conditions; *the sick in*, where workers call in sick rather than declare a formal strike; and *inefficiency*, a tactic that argues that just as cheap prices of a commodity dictate lesser value of that product, so too should poor wages generate inefficient shoddy work. Absent from any of the tactics mentioned here is formal approval of any union. Direct action simply requires that works act in unison to use the tools at their disposal to put pressure on employers to have their demands met.

Direct action is a flexible tactic that requires only solidarity from those who participate. While it includes carefully planned action like the strike that shuts down an entire workplace, it can also be spontaneous and with only a handful of participants. Gross and Lind (2001) tell a story that demonstrates this flexibility, describing a Wiccan Starbucks barista who was reprimanded for wearing a pentagram necklace which held religious significance. When she refused to take it off, she was sent home early, affecting her paycheck and ability to provide for

her family. When she was sent home again, a coworker and IWW member donned the necklace and was asked to leave as well. The union took up her cause with public protest and legal filings, and she was provided back pay and allowed to wear her necklace without being sent home. One worker displayed solidarity and took spontaneous direct action to rectify injustice towards a coworker.

Solidarity requires self-reliance and direct action to harness the collective power of workers to create more equitable working conditions. Workers must be self-reliant, as they cannot rely on bureaucratic unions or employers to adequately represent their interests. Direct action allows workers to take action in the workplace with the tools at their disposal. They need not have approval of the union bureaucracy for these methods to be effective, as long as workers act collectively they hold the power to make demands of employers. Though solidarity ultimately shapes the IWW's desired action, the union's call to action follows two distinct strategies: completion of a narrative and compare/contrast. Having established these ultimate goals of the IWW's organizing call, I now move to their first strategy, in which the IWW compares themselves to other larger unions to demonstrate the effectiveness of their methods.

The IWW vs. Business Unions

The IWW's goal is that all workers join together in unions to abolish the wage system. However, as discussed, they envision a particular form of organization: minority unionism. Instilling workers with class consciousness by constituting an identity as proletarian reinforces the need to organize, but by demonstrating the nondemocratic nature of larger unions the IWW is able to strengthen their message by calling workers to join the IWW; a union that is capable of uniting workers to utilize the untapped potential of the proletarian class. In this section, I elaborate this strategy, in which the IWW compare and contrast themselves to demonstrate their

superior ability to organize workers. I argue that this strategy also serves to unmask the extent to which large labor unions are undemocratic institutions.

Slosarski (2016) demonstrates the usefulness of a strategy of unmasking in his analysis of Wisconsin's 2011 labor protests. She argues that by using culture jamming, protests "jammed economist realist rhetoric and embodied an alternative to a free market-based society, re-enacting the possibility of collective action in a neoliberal world" (p. 263). That is to say, protestors exposed the supposedly market-driven rhetoric of Governor Scott Walker as actually rooted in ideology. Slosarski (2016) also provides a useful definition for the unmasking, describing it as "a rhetoric that posits a hidden truth that is in some way more real, primary, or authentic than that which hides it" (p. 255). In comparing and contrasting themselves with other unions, the IWW is able to unmask the undemocratic practices of large labor unions which only serve to hamper the pursuit of true worker liberation.

The IWW bills itself as democratic, and thus accepting of all rank-and-file workers. As *Solidarity: The IWW and the Industrial Union Movement in America* describes it, the same cannot be said for other unions:

Historically, the Wobblies have always focused on helping organize those workers that the American Federation of Labor (AFL) shunned. In the early 1900s that meant African-Americans, immigrants, women, and unskilled laborers. Today that means curbside recyclers, non-profit staffers, temp workers, sex-industry workers, co-op employees – in short, any worker in any workplace regardless of size or structure; even those the AFL-CIO considers too small or unimportant to organize. In our modern economy, with its small workplaces, minimum wage jobs, and focus on the service industry, the IWW

approach of organizing by industry is the ideal way to ensure that all workers are represented and considered important parts of the union.

If the IWW is to provide an outlet for all workers, it must not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, or religion. The union will, however, refuse admittance on the basis of class, for as *You are the Union* describes, “If you don't hire and fire other workers, you are a welcome member of this organization and a fellow worker, brother or sister.” While other unions may accept any employee, the IWW refuses to allow any worker who may be aligned with their employer, or unable to show solidarity by controlling workers’ fates as managers.

A second key difference the IWW is keen to highlight is their method of organization on the job site, known as “industrial organization.” *You are the Union* describes this tactic:

What is meant by “organizing industrially” is that workers organize by where and what is produced, rather than the specific work or tool that is used. For example, someone working in a clothing factory would be in a textile union of all workers engaged in the work of making that factory run, rather than a separate union for the janitors, assembly line workers, office workers, or warehouse workers

Such a tactic promotes solidarity, as all the union members in a workplace are members of the same union. Many unions organize by trade, or the specific job that each worker performs. As *You are the Union* makes clear, trade organization only serves to benefit employers, as they “like to have the work force divided, and that is why one union is a better tool to deal with the boss than many unions in the same shop or industry.” Not only do bureaucratic unions fail to represent their members’ interests, but their organizational tactic lack solidarity and hinder the possibility of collective action.

Once organized, workers must act in concert to pressure bosses and enact demands. Here too, the IWW differentiates themselves from other unions by advocating for the importance of direct action. In a jab at the representative models of majority unions, *The IWW - The ABC's of Revolutionary Unionism* describes these tactics, writing, “rather than relying on others to fight our fights for us, we believe we can and should only rely on each other. This is also known as Direct Action, and it can take many forms.” Miller (2017) reiterates this point: “Because the IWW believed in direct industrial action, rather than on delegating its power to union bosses and politicians, those who sought to enrich themselves on the backs of the working people grew to hate the IWW.” The union’s reliance on direct action is not only a difference in tactics, it is indicative of a key philosophical difference in the ways that these unions view their members. Wobblies rely on one another for strength, believing that strength lies in collective numbers acting together in democratic action, while larger unions believe their leaders ought to decide what’s best for membership.

By comparing themselves to other labor unions the IWW strengthens the organizing call to workers by asking simply not that workers join any union, but that they join the IWW. This strategy addresses three major areas of the union: who may join, how workers are organized, and the kinds of tactics workers enact to have their demands met. This strategy also serves to unmask the reality of large labor unions, those who have grown complacent with the protections the Wagner Act afforded them. By exposing the undemocratic methods of larger unions, the IWW further cements the necessity of direct action and solidarity, while strengthening the extent to which class struggle has gripped all of society. The need for revolution is certainly dire if even the largest organizations claiming to benefit workers are in reality maintaining the status quo. Debs (1909) argues that business unions are "held up as model labor leaders by capitalist

newspapers" (p. 30). By unmasking the reality of these unions, the IWW is able to call workers to abolish the wage system.

Completion of the Narrative

As discussed in the previous chapter, the IWW recounts American labor history in the form of a collective memory of victimhood which portrays workers as perpetual victims of exploitation at the hands of the capitalist class to instill class consciousness into workers. The IWW uses this collective memory as an incomplete narrative which will result in the abolition of the wage system and more equitable working conditions once completed. This narrative builds on the same elements of the collective memory, highlighting historic labor victories and the effects of the Wagner Act as the basis for action which might take place today. Having demonstrated the ways in which bureaucratic unions and undemocratic and have failed to represent workers' interests, the IWW urges workers to participate in minority unions which rely on worker solidarity, not union representation, to have their demands met. In this section I highlight this narrative strategy, demonstrating this call which asks workers to act in the present to end a history of injustice. This action centers around solidarity, encouraging workers to mirror the actions of early labor organizers and engage in minority unions.

Charland (1987) highlights a similar strategy put in place by the Parti Québécois' (PQ) 1980 referendum for political independence for Canada's French-speaking residents. The PQ sought to foster a Québécois identity among French-speaking residents by recounting the history of French speakers as one of loyal subjugation to England, even as the world was ripe for them to declare independence, with the United States declaring independence from England in 1776. This tactic, Charland (1987) argues, has the constitutive effect of instilling the Québécois identity in voters, before asking them to take logical action in the form of voting for

independence by completing the narrative of the long-loyal Québécois by finally gaining political independence. The IWW too employs this tactic by first instilling a sense of class consciousness in workers, constituting an identity as proletarian. The only logical action for this working class is to end their history of exploitation by banding together in solidarity to abolish the wage system.

As the IWW asks workers to take action, one of the strategies it employs relies on the completion of their narrative of the worker as historical exploited. As workers come to identify as proletarian, they realize their place in the history of class struggle. This history is highlighted by early labor battles and labor laws which have created large, inefficient bureaucratic unions which further hinder workers' ability to change their material conditions by failing to represent their interests. The IWW re-employs these same elements to convince workers to take collective action and end this narrative with a more equitable world for workers.

The IWW returns to the early years of the union by reinforcing the resolve of early union leaders, who took action when the IWW held greater power. Acott (2006) describes the leadership of IWW founder William Haywood:

William D. Haywood, AKA Big Bill, used to sign his letters and correspondences "Help the work along, William D. Haywood." He was founding organizer and the General Secretary Treasurer of the IWW for many years, through our most turbulent times, and a great leader. That closing formula tells you a lot about his method of leadership, and the union of the time. Help the work along. We joined together, then and now, to do a job of work, to accomplish a task, for ourselves and each other, for our class and for generations to come. That task, simply stated in the preamble, is the Abolition of the Wage System.

Building a new society within the shell of the old. Ending, once and for all the tyranny of money, boss over worker. (p. 31)

As this passage suggests, the IWW sees the key to effective labor organization lies in a return to the methods of the past. As their collective memory makes clear, early labor battles were hard fought, but produced results. If workers are to end “once and for all the tyranny of money,” to end the exploitation of the wage system, they must join together in solidarity to fight against their employers.

The Union on our Terms provides more specific prescriptive behavior harkening back to the fight to establish an 8-hour workday as the grounds for organizing as a minority union:

We need to return to the sort of rank-and-file-on-the-job agitating that won the 8-hour day and built unionism as a vital force. One way to do this is what has become now as “minority unionism.” We need to form meaningful, organized networks of solidarity capable of winning improvements in individual workplaces, throughout industries, and for the benefit of the international working class. (p. 11)

Again, the IWW returns to early labor history, when unions held greater power, as the basis for how workers ought to organize themselves today. This action calls for minority unionism, a type of labor organization in which workers need not join the union with exclusive negotiating rights at their workplace. These larger unions with the exclusive right to bargain are typically bureaucratic, and do not promote solidarity as they ask workers to trust the union to negotiate on their behalf, instead of banding together in solidarity to have their needs met.

Minority unionism gained importance as a result of the Wagner Act of 1935, which was intended to provide protection to labor unions. Though early labor struggles may have been

effective, they were bloody affairs which the government sought to end with legislation. The Wagner Act regulated the process, by forcing employers to recognize unions that won majority representation of a workplace. As the IWW's collective memory makes clear, this was a turning point for organized labor as it allowed unions to maintain operation simply by obtaining a majority vote, without the need for beneficial action to legitimize their existence. To counter the bureaucratic unions that resulted from the Wagner Act, the IWW encourages workers to participate in minority unionism, a form of labor organization in which workers rely on a network of solidarity, rather than the formal declaration of exclusive bargaining rights that large business unions hold.

Buss (2006) is explicit in its call to abandon the majority union method brought about by the Wagner Act, writing, "If unionism is to become a movement again, we need to break out of the current model, one that has come to rely on a recipe increasingly difficult to prepare: a majority of workers vote a union in, a contract is bargained" (p. 11). The piece continues by outlining the rights and protections afforded to minority unions:

For the most part you have as many legal rights as a minority union as a majority union does – with the single exception of being certified as the exclusive bargaining agent with the sole authority to negotiate a contract. As long as workers are acting in concert, they enjoy the same basic legal rights – such as those are – whether or not they are in an officially certified union. A minority union has the right to: 1) present grievances (though there may not be a formal grievance procedure in place) 2) engage in concerted activity 3) to make demands upon the boss 4) to seek meetings 5) and even to strike (though this isn't a great idea if you don't have majority support) [sic] (p. 11)

Present again in this strategy is the importance of solidarity. Workers are encouraged to join together to confront their bosses, but without majority support aren't encouraged to strike. Inadequate support increases the likelihood that not all workers will strike, sowing discord amongst the ranks and pitting workers against one another. Though the strike is the ubiquitous bargaining tactic of organized labor, the IWW largely abandons it in favor of direct action.

By framing labor action as the completion of a narrative, the IWW harnesses what Charland (1987) terms the "narrative ideological effect" (p. 139). The union's subjective view of history masks reality and asks workers to take appropriate action to complete this narrative. For the IWW, this narrative is a collective memory of victimhood. Workers have always been exploited by the capitalist class and will continue to be exploited unless they take collective action. Though workers and employers are naturally set in conflict as a result of their class position, the struggle was made direr by the inception of large bureaucratic unions which ought to gain concessions for workers, but instead mimic the structures that they contend to oppose. The completion of this collective memory of victimhood requires concerted activity on the behalf of workers which mirrors the action of early labor battles. Moreover, workers must organize in minority unionism; a model of organizing that eliminates the bureaucratic tendencies of larger unions and requires that workers use solidarity and direct action to negotiate with workers rather than representative majority bargaining.

Conclusion

The IWW's call to workers relies on instilling a sense of class consciousness before asking workers to take collective action. This action requested of workers centers around solidarity, which unites workers in a strict code of conduct, and is made up of two components: self-reliance and direct action. Solidarity requires self-reliance as workers cannot rely on their

employers or bureaucratic unions to have their best interests in mind. Direct action requires self-reliance, as workers rely on one another to manipulate the tools of their jobs to compromise the creation of profit and put pressure on bosses. Solidarity is the philosophy which drives the IWW's call to action, playing such an important role that it functions as both a noun and a verb. Solidarity is an action that workers undertake when performing direct action, but it is also a way of being. In this way I argue that it functions as a reprogramming of the proletariat. When workers enact solidarity, they work in cooperation towards a common goal, putting collective well-being over personal gain. In doing so, they counter the competition between workers upon which capitalism relies. The class-conscious worker replaces the competitive nature of capitalism, which pits workers against one another, with solidarity that unites the working class.

Rhetorically, the IWW's call to action follows two strategies: the completion of a narrative and a comparison of IWW against other larger unions. In asking workers to use their actions to complete the narrative history of workers the IWW relies on their actions to provide a logical conclusion to the collective memory of victimhood they provided to workers. The proletarian class has always been exploited by the bourgeoisie and will continue to be exploited unless they come together in solidarity to abolish the wage system. This rhetorical strategy achieves what Charland (1987) calls the "narrative ideological effect," as it is based on a subjective telling of history and calls for specific action. As the IWW compares themselves to other unions, they are able to unmask the undemocratic nature of these bureaucratic unions which fail to represent workers' interests, and only maintain the status quo. This comparison highlights who can join the union, how the union is organized, and the kinds of tactics used to have their demands met.

Chapter Seven:

CONCLUSION

The Industrial Workers of the World's call to organization presents an opportunity to examine the ways in which the working class might counter the hegemony of the capitalist class. Moreover, the union's push toward solidarity and minority unionism offers a promising model for future labor organizers seeking to enact meaningful change in which labor's demands are met without interference from employers or bureaucratic unions. In this chapter, I first answer the research questions that have guided this project, specifically pertaining to how the IWW positions workers as transhistorical subjects and then asks them to complete this narrative in a call to action. Next, I consider the implications of this research for future labor organization and scholars. Finally, I conclude by presenting ideas for future research.

Research Questions

The Trans-Historic Subject. This thesis analyzes the ways in which the IWW seeks to motivate workers toward action. As a historic labor union, the IWW is keen to leverage its history and experience fighting for workers as justification for the action that workers ought to take. Given that this union history informs the union's call to action, I thus ask:

RQ1: In what ways does the IWW position the worker as a transhistorical subject?

The IWW presents a collective memory of victimhood in which workers have been pitted against their employers in a losing battle since the inception of capitalism. Heavily influenced by Marxist theory, this memory demonstrates the ways in which the working class is exploited for their labor: the masses who operate the means of production are forced in to poor working conditions to generate profit for the few who own these machines. This memory also serves to

instill workers with class consciousness. The IWW demonstrates that under capitalism, workers are by nature set in opposition with the bourgeoisie. As long as workers are compensated for their labor with wages, they will be the subjects of injustice.

Though workers have been consistently victimized under capitalism, their employers are not the sole villains. Labor law, most specifically the Wagner Act, has failed to provide the worker protection it was intended, and instead created conditions in which major labor unions have become bloated and ineffective. These unions, which ought to be one of the few organizations championing workers' causes, have been granted exclusive bargaining rights with employers, and are now undemocratic institutions which simply mirror the structures of the corporations they ought to be opposing. Union bosses, who may not themselves perform labor, can negotiate contracts on the behalf of workers, without having to represent their best interests.

This collective memory stretches the length of capitalism, demonstrating the resolve of early IWW organizers who gained protections like the 8-hour work day, or were slain and martyred. However, the IWW's telling of history culminates in the demonstration of how current material conditions are the result of a class struggle which has continuously favored the rich. This telling of history is certainly bleak: workers are doomed to exploitation by their employers and have been betrayed by the labor unions which ought to protect them. However, this memory does provide hope for the possibility of change by instilling workers with class consciousness. The workers are many, and the bosses are few. They alone can operate the means of production upon which society relies. Though workers have won few victories, their potential remains unrealized, a potential only made possible by realizing their position in the class system.

In positioning workers within the class system, the IWW's constituting does not benefit from the same geographical and linguistic continuities as did the Parti Québécois. Charland

(1987) describes a movement which calls into existence the Québécoise identity in order to elicit political action. Those who identify as Québécoise share a common language and geographical borders, but workers only share their position in capitalism's class system. This fact only demonstrates the extent to which identity can be constructed rhetorically, as absent these strong unifying factors the IWW is still able to unite workers in a proletarian identification.

Furthermore, class-based identity reinforces the materiality of a constitutive rhetoric, as workers' material conditions, and relation to modes of production inspire identity and action.

Call to Action. The IWW positions workers as perpetual victims, who have suffered continuous injustice under capitalism. This collective memory not only instills class consciousness by positioning workers as proletarian within the class system but serves as the basis for the IWW's call to action. As transhistoric subjects, the union asks workers to take action which is justified by this history of victimhood. That is, the IWW's call to action is the logical conclusion to a narrative of victimhood. Workers must take collective action to end the systematic exploitation to which they've been subjected. I thus ask:

RQ2: In what ways does the IWW ask its audience to complete the narrative of the worker?

The IWW makes two requests of workers: solidarity and minority unionism, each of which function to band workers together in collective action. Such action is necessary to begin harnessing the untapped potential of the working class in order to abolish the wage system.

Solidarity serves as a strict code of ethics which reprograms workers to counter capitalism. It requires that workers be self-reliant, depending on each other to gain concessions from employers and build a more equitable workplace. Neither employers nor bureaucratic unions can be trusted to provide for workers' interests, thus they must support each other at all

costs. As workers fight to gain concessions from their employers, they are urged to take direct action. Such action compromises the ability for the capitalist to generate profit, by asking workers to utilize the tools at their disposal to halt, or slow down production. Direct action necessitates self-reliance, as workers must be steadfast in their resolve, and not cave to employer pressure to end their tactics.

Labor law created the conditions which allowed unions to become bloated and ineffective, thus workers are urged to participate in minority unionism by banding together in smaller unions which do not maintain exclusive bargaining rights with employers. By doing so, workers represent themselves, and do not have to rely on a union boss to represent the interests of many.

As the IWW asks workers to complete the narrative of class struggle and victimhood, it reveals the reasons for which Marxist revolution might be best understood as possibility instead of inevitability. The union demonstrates the ways in which capitalism must inherently exploit workers, culminating in a world of vast income inequality and misery for the working class. However, workers must still be encouraged to take collective action. Hegemonic forces render capitalism seemingly natural such that no revolution might occur naturally without organizing action.

Implications

Recent events have demonstrated the effectiveness of the IWW's organizational methods, highlighting the importance of this project. Public school teachers in West Virginia walked out of their classrooms, prompting a nine-day strike which forced the closing of all the public schools in the state. At the heart of the wildcat strike was low pay since West Virginia teachers

were ranked 47th in the nation in average pay and rising healthcare costs. Beginning on February 22, 2018, the strike seemed to have ended on February 28, with union leaders reaching an agreement with Governor Jim Justice on a 4% pay raise. This agreement, however, was short of the originally requested 5% raise, and failed to address healthcare costs.

Despite initial reporting that the strike had ended, many teachers felt betrayed by union leaders, and refused to return to work, prolonging the strike. Prominent in the agitation was the IWW, who distributed flyers and in their typical fashion encouraged teachers to disregard their union's agreement in pursuance of their initial demands. Such a strategy proved successful, as the teachers' demands were met and they returned to work on March 6, 2018. The West Virginia teachers' strike holds four major societal implications by providing: 1) a successful tactic which might promote a resurgence of strike activity; 2) a counter to proposed right-to-work measures facing public sector employees; 3) a source of inspiration for women's rights activism; and 4) new possibilities and obstacles for grassroots organization without unions.

The West Virginia strikes received prominent coverage due to their scale, and the current relative scarcity of large scale strike activity. The success of the strike caught the attention of teachers in other states suffering from low-pay and overcrowded classrooms, with teachers in Oklahoma, Kentucky, and Arizona considering staging widespread walkouts (Greenhouse, 2018). With strike activity steadily decreasing since the 1950s, a prominent successful strike might inspire a return to action by organized labor. Moreover, the grassroots nature of the strike, in which workers refused to return to work in defiance of their union's tentative agreement, demonstrates the effectiveness of the IWW's methods. Should workers realize that they can employ direct action tactics without the approval of large unions, they begin to abandon these

unions, leading to structural change which forces them to truly represent workers' best interests or disband.

Given that the West Virginia strike featured public school teachers, it logically caught the attention of other public employees, many of which face cuts to their salaries and pensions in the face of increasing austerity measures. This strike proved it possible for public employees to earn mass goodwill in their endeavor for higher pay, even though these pay increases must come from taxpayer money. More importantly, a successful public employee strike, without the assistance of a major union, might serve to counter the upcoming *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court ruling which would enact right-to-work measures on public sector unions (Liptak, 2018). The blow to organized labor that this ruling would bring would be lessened should public workers rely on one another in solidarity, rather than unions.

Janus v. AFSCME threatens the wellbeing of all public-sector unions, but, as Richman (2018) notes, a ruling against public unions might be a catalyst for increased labor action. Unions routinely trade no-strike clauses for the ability to collect agency fees, and should these fees be ruled unconstitutional unions will have no incentive to restrict strike activity. Furthermore, the threat of free riders might lead unions to abandon exclusive representation entirely, creating a scenario where all public-sector organization occurs through minority unionism. Should this be the case, workplaces might become battlegrounds with new unions competing to enroll members, creating an opportunity for the IWW to return to prominence. If the effects of the West Virginia strikes are any indication, workers are ready to embrace widespread direct action and might be receptive to the IWW's message.

The strikes in West Virginia carry important implications for the future of organized labor, but as Griffiths (2018) notes, the concerns over healthcare costs and privacy that helped

prompt the strikes were particularly motivating to women. These same concerns are shared by abortion-rights activists seeking bodily autonomy who might draw inspiration from the strikes' success. As these strikes prove, women, when acting in concert, have the ability to enact legislative change in their favor.

Most of the organization of teachers occurred online, with many communicating through a large Facebook group (Bidgood & Robertson, 2018). Massive online labor organization is logical given the prominence of social media and increasing interconnectedness of everyday life. This offers promising opportunities for an increase in labor activity but is not without its potential downfalls. Should workers turn to the internet to organize and become increasingly combative with the corporations that employ them, their efforts to organize might be undermined by corporate interference with the algorithms that help dictate how users find and interact with one another on social media.

The degree to which social media manipulation might have affected the results of the 2016 U.S. presidential election remains unclear, but the use and control of social media remains largely unregulated (Alvarez, 2017). Should the forefront of labor organization move online, there currently exists little protection that might prevent corporations or governments from interfering. Labor activists would be keen to monitor social media's role in worker organization, as labor law may soon need to expand to protect workers who use the internet to organize.

Directions for Future Research

Theoretical conceptualizing of solidarity has typically been conducted by scholars of religion and philosophy, but as this thesis argues, the Industrial Workers of the World require workers to engage in a strict code of solidarity that can be seen as a reprogramming of workers

against the selfishness and competitiveness which drives capitalism. This distinction is important, for as Salerno (1989) notes, in the IWW's decline it has come to function more as a social movement than a labor union. Thus, the brand of solidarity which it promotes is philosophical, though in a different nature. For the IWW solidarity is not simply something one does in the workplace, but a way of being which dictates how the proletarian ought to behave at all times. Scholars have traditionally treated solidarity as the abstract reasoning for which individuals might take up a common cause and join together, but the IWW provides an explicit code of conduct for how workers ought to behave.

The IWW's code of solidarity provides a valuable standard for how workers ought to conduct themselves but is troubling for its potential to hide sexual discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Because the union discourages workers from reporting their colleagues' behaviors to bosses there is little room for workers to report problematic behavior they may witness. Though the union has policies in place to deal with union members who commit such acts, the code of solidarity is unable to hold accountable those who are not in the union. IWW leaders and labor scholars would be wise to examine the ways in which solidarity might counterproductively maintain systems of oppression.

If the IWW is to be viewed as a social movement, they merit scholastic attention as a counterpublic. Cloud (2018) notes that Habermasian public sphere theory has been widely criticized for failing to material concerns, particularly those of women and workers. Furthermore, Cloud (2018) provides a valuable definition for what a materialist counterpublic might look like, describing them as "actually existing and historical formations, related to social movements with constitutive (identity-constructing) and instrumental (with demands on institutions) forms (pp. 1-2). The IWW fulfills these requirements by instilling workers with

class consciousness before moving them to act in solidarity and minority unionism. That the union is able to meet Cloud's requirements suggests that there is room for a materialist conception of the counterpublic, and that the IWW merits inclusion in this discussion.

Concluding Thoughts

I undertook this project in search of alternative methods of labor organization, as existing practices had been unable to prevent, or reverse labor's current weakened capacity. Though once a vibrant, active labor union, the IWW's current state might suggest that their methods are too radical or outdated to be effective today. However, after the successful strikes in West Virginia, and the stirring of widespread labor activity in public spheres in Oklahoma and Kentucky, Marx and the IWW appear vindicated. As these events show, the working-class' power results from sheer numbers and operation of means of production.

Labor unions provide valuable avenues for the organization of resources and activity, but many of the larger unions have become bloated and ineffective. I do not suggest abandoning labor unions altogether, but IWW tactics, which rely upon workers' collective strength rather than collective bargaining, present an opportunity to improve workers' material conditions and force labor unions to better represent their labor constituents. Moving forward, workers should harness their collective power in solidarity, employing direct action tactics to have their demands met, with or without the approval of their unions.

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